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Spring

# EPI-MONITOR

DOH-COLLIER NEWSLETTER

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## Disease Spotlight: Dengue Fever

Dengue fever is a mosquito-borne illness caused by the dengue virus. The disease occurs in tropical and subtropical regions of the world, mainly affecting Southeast Asia, the western Pacific islands, Latin America, and Africa. In the past 10 years, reports of dengue fever have increased in the Southern United States, including local outbreaks within Florida.

Dengue is spread through the bite of mosquitos of the *Aedes* genus, several species of which are found in Collier County. Most cases of dengue fever are asymptomatic. If present, symptoms typically appear three to fourteen days after the bite of an infected mosquito and include sudden onset of fever, severe headache, retro-orbital pain, muscle and joint pain, rash, vomiting, and diarrhea. Symptoms usually last two to seven days, and most people recover by resting, drinking plenty of fluids, and taking over-the-counter acetaminophen.



Image: A dengue-transmitting mosquito species, *Aedes aegypti*.

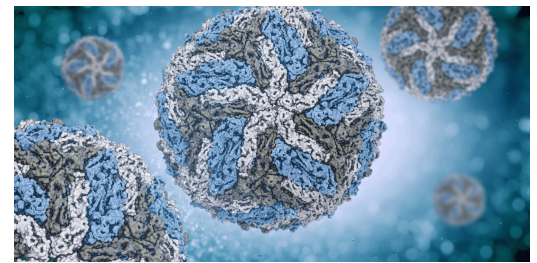


Image: Microscopic rendition of dengue virus particles.

Rarely, dengue fever can progress to a life-threatening illness. Severe dengue symptoms often appear after the fever has gone away and include abdominal pain or tenderness, repeated vomiting, and signs of internal bleeding. For people with severe dengue, immediate emergency care is needed.

Most dengue cases reported in the continental United States are linked to travelers who were infected by visiting areas with risk of dengue. To prevent the spread of dengue while outside the United States, travelers should review country-specific travel recommendations and health notices, pack an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellent, follow steps to prevent mosquito bites, and see a healthcare provider if they develop a fever or have symptoms of dengue. Travelers returning from an area with risk of dengue should take steps to avoid mosquito bites for 3 weeks to prevent the spread of dengue to local mosquitoes.

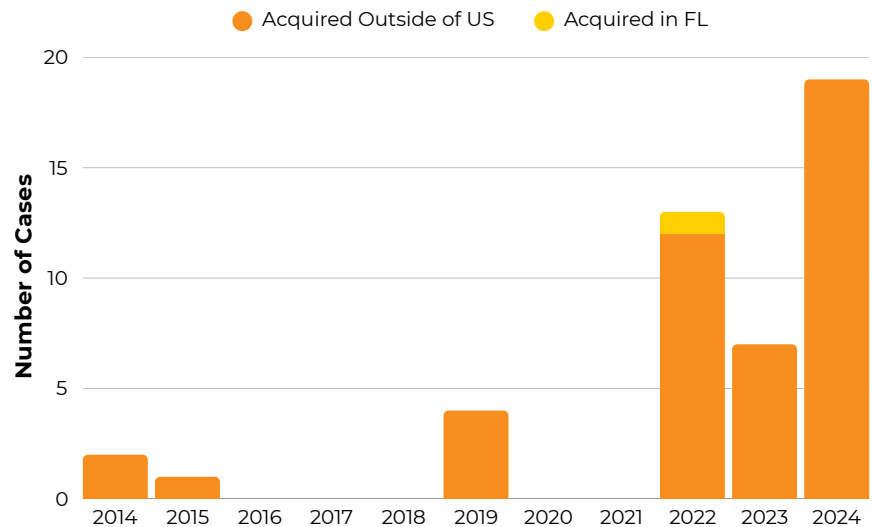
# Dengue Updates

Although dengue is currently managed in Collier County through pest control and source reduction, travel-associated dengue cases are increasingly recorded each year. Sporadic local transmission is seen in other parts of South Florida, making it important to stay proactive to prevent dengue outbreaks.

Since 2014, Collier has reported 46 cases of dengue, with the majority reported within the past three years. All cases but one were acquired outside of the United States. It is important to follow travel guidelines and mosquito control measures to prevent contracting dengue.

For more information on dengue, visit the Florida Department of Health website.

## Reported Dengue Fever Cases in Collier County, 2014-2024



Florida Department of Health. (2024, January 3). Dengue Fever. Diseases and Conditions | FDOH. <https://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/dengue/index.html>

Stephenson, C. J., Coatsworth, H., Waits, C. M., Nazario-Maldonado, N. M., Mathias, D. K., Dinglasan, R. R., & Lednický, J. A. (2021). Geographic partitioning of dengue virus transmission risk in Florida. *Viruses*, 13(11), 2232. <https://doi.org/10.3390/v13112232>

## Mosquito-Borne Diseases: Stop the Spread

### Protect Yourself with Repellent



Always read label directions carefully for the approved usage before you apply a repellent.



Apply insect repellent to exposed skin or clothing, but not under clothing.



Treat clothing and gear with products containing 0.5% permethrin. Do not apply permethrin directly to skin.

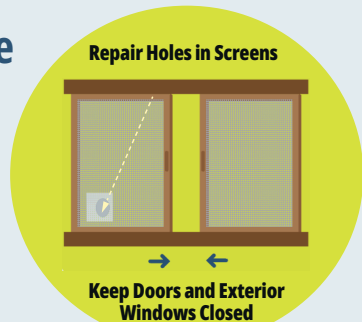


Some repellents are not suitable for children. Ensure repellent is safe for children and age appropriate.

### Keep them Outside

Use Air Conditioning

Keep Screens on All Windows



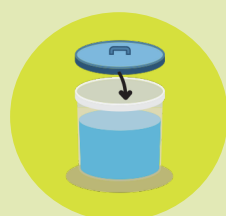
### Stop Mosquitoes from Breeding

Mosquitoes can live indoors and will bite at any time, day or night.

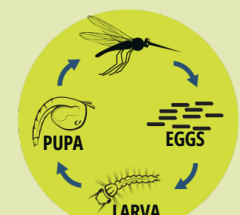
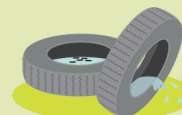
#### Around Buildings

At least once a week, empty or cover anything that could hold water, such as:

- Buckets and toys
- Child Pools and pool covers
- Birdbaths
- Trash, containers, and recycling bins
- Boat or car covers
- Roof gutters
- Coolers
- Pet dishes
- Tires



Mosquitoes breed by laying eggs in and near standing water.



As little as one teaspoon or bottle cap of water standing for more than one week is enough for mosquitoes to breed and multiply.



Florida  
HEALTH

# Water Health and Safety

You can get a swimming-related illness if you have contact with, swallow, or breathe in water contaminated with germs in pools, oceans, lakes, or rivers.

The most common recreational water illnesses are diarrhea, pneumonia or flu-like illness, skin rashes, swimmer's ear, and irritation of the eyes or respiratory tract.

**Did you know?** Chlorine kills most bacteria in the water, however, a few germs such as Giardia and Cryptosporidium can be chlorine tolerant. People who are sick with diarrhea can spread these germs to others if they have diarrhea in the water or if other people swallow the contaminated water.

**Make sure you stay safe and healthy by following these tips once you are in the water:**

- Do not pee or poop in the water
- Do not swallow the water
- Take children on bathroom breaks frequently and check diapers every hour
- Dry ears after swimming



## Animal Bites and Rabies



A **rabies exposure** is any bite, scratch, or other situation in which saliva and other fluids from a suspect or known rabid animal or person enters via an open wound, is transplanted into, or comes in contact with mucous membranes of another animal or person. If left untreated, the virus is almost always fatal. Immediate immunization is crucial for those affected.

Individuals who have not had previous treatment for rabies will require 4 doses of the rabies immunization, administered on days 0, 3, 7, and 14 following exposure. Rabies immunoglobulin (HRIG) should be administered at the same time as the first dose of the rabies series, injected in and around the wound area. The remaining volume should be given intramuscularly. **HRIG is ineffective if injected in the gluteal region, unless the exposure occurred in the gluteal site.** Immunocompromised persons receive a fifth immunization on day 28, followed by a titer 1 to 2 weeks later. For individuals who have received previous treatment for rabies, only 2 doses given on day 0 and day 3 may be necessary.

## Reminders

**Rabies Possible Exposure:** If a patient has an exposure requiring post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), treatment must start at the emergency room and the epidemiology program must be contacted 239-252-8226. Please fax a copy of the animal bite report to Domestic Animals Services (fax: 239-252-2343) as soon as possible. It is important that the bite reports are submitted to Collier County Domestic Animal Services in a timely manner so that investigations can begin as soon as possible. The epidemiology program is available for consultation regarding the initiation of rabies PEP.

**Reportable Diseases/Conditions:** Provided a patient is diagnosed with a disease or health condition that is reportable under Florida law, someone from the epidemiology program at the DOH-Collier will be contacting them via telephone, mail, and/or home visit to conduct an epidemiologic interview.

**Attention:** Certain diseases and conditions in Florida must be reported immediately upon suspicion to the Department of Health. These high-priority conditions, marked in red on the reportable diseases list, require urgent reporting to facilitate rapid public health response.

Timely reporting ensures appropriate investigation, contact tracing, and control measures.

For the full list and reporting guidelines, visit the link below.

[https://collier.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/infectious-disease-services/healthcare-providers/\\_documents/reportablediseasepractitionerlist.pdf](https://collier.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/infectious-disease-services/healthcare-providers/_documents/reportablediseasepractitionerlist.pdf)

**Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention:** Infants born to women who test HBsAg-positive should receive hepatitis B immune globulin and the hepatitis B vaccine series. DOH-Collier monitors these infants' records, and then requests testing to confirm immunity to hepatitis B after completion of the immunizations. Current household, sexual, and needle-sharing contacts of pre-natal clients who test HBsAg-positive will be identified, and the DOH-Collier will provide testing and immunoprophylaxis for these individuals. If you have a pregnant client who tests HBsAg-positive, please notify the epidemiology program at 239-252-8226.

# Comparison of Selected Reportable Diseases for Collier County, 2024-2025

	January-March 2024	January-March 2025*
<b>Central Nervous System &amp; Invasive Diseases</b>		
CREUTZFELDT-JAKOB DISEASE (CJD)	0	0
MENINGITIS (BACTERIAL, CRYPTOCOCCAL, MYCOTIC)	1	0
MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE	0	0
<b>Hepatitis</b>		
HEPATITIS A	0	0
HEPATITIS B ACUTE	1	2
HEPATITIS B (+HBsAg IN PREGNANT WOMEN)*	3	5
HEPATITIS B CHRONIC	41	19
HEPATITIS C ACUTE	3	0
HEPATITIS C CHRONIC	36	19
<b>Enteric Diseases</b>		
CAMPYLOBACTERIOSIS	36	41
CHOLERA (VIBRIO CHOLERA, TYPE O1)	0	0
CRYPTOSPORIDIOSIS	4	1
CYCLOSPORIASIS	0	0
ESCHERICHIA COLI, SHIGA TOXIN PRODUCING	10	4
GIARDIASIS	5	2
HEMOLYTIC UREMIC SYNDROME	0	0
SALMONELLOSIS	22	14
SHIGELLOSIS	4	3
VIBRIO ALGINOLYTICUS	1	0
VIBRIO PARAHAEMOLYTICUS	0	0
VIBRIO VULNIFICUS	0	0
OTHER VIBRIO SPECIES	1	0
<b>Vaccine Preventable Diseases</b>		
INFLUENZA A (NOVEL OR PANDEMIC STRAINS)	0	0
INFLUENZA A (PEDIATRIC MORTALITY)	0	0
MUMPS	0	0
PERTUSSIS	5	11
VARICELLA	0	3
<b>Vector Borne &amp; Zoonotic Diseases</b>		
RABIES POSSIBLE EXPOSURE	35	23
BRUCELLA	0	0
DENGUE FEVER (IMPORTED)	1	3
LYME DISEASE	0	3
MALARIA	1	0
RABID ANIMALS	0	0
SPOTTED FEVER RICKETTSIOSES	0	0
WEST NILE VIRUS	2	0
<b>Others</b>		
CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING	5	5
CIGUATERA FISH POISONING	0	0
LEAD POISONING	32	5
LEGIONELLOSIS	4	4
LISTERIOSIS	0	1
PESTICIDE-RELATED ILLNESS/INJURY	0	0
<b>Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs)</b>		
CHLAMYDIA	366	297
GONORRHEA	52	37
SYPHILIS	77	48

\*Disease counts for 2025 are preliminary