

# **DENGUE FEVER**

## **What is Dengue Fever?**

Dengue fever is a disease that is spread through mosquitoes. It is a virus and is categorized by four viral types (DENV1, DENV2, DENV3, or DENV4). Dengue hemorrhagic fever (DHF) is a more severe form of dengue fever and can be fatal if unrecognized. The *Aedes aegypti* mosquito is the primary vector or transmitter of dengue fever, although in Hawaii, dengue has been transmitted by *Aedes albopictus*. It is estimated that over 100 million cases of dengue are diagnosed worldwide every year. There is no vaccine or specific drug to treat dengue fever; however, infected individuals should be under the care of a doctor who would provide pain medications, fluids and rest.

## **How is it spread?**

Dengue fever is spread through the bite of an *Aedes* mosquito that is infected with the virus. Dengue fever cannot be spread from person to person, but it can be spread from a mosquito that bites an infected person and then bites a healthy person.

## **What are the signs and symptoms?**

The most common symptoms are: severe headache, severe eye pain (behind the eyes), severe joint, muscle and/or bone pain, vomiting, black stools, drowsiness or irritability, rash, mild bleeding of the nose or gums, petechial rash, shortness of breath and easy bruising.

## **What is the incubation period and how long is it communicable?**

Dengue fever is not communicable person to person, but the mosquito can incubate the virus for approximately 1 week and then transmit it to a different person.

## **How can I prevent this disease?**

Avoid mosquito bites by following the **5 Ds**: avoid being outside at **Dusk** and **Dawn**, wear **Deet** and **Dress** with long pants and long sleeves if you are outside during peak times, and **Drain** all standing water (potted plants, tires, un-chlorinated swimming pools etc).

## **What should I do about it?**

Persons who have these symptoms should see their physicians. This is **an immediately reportable disease** and should be reported to Santa Rosa County Health Department. For more information, please contact the Santa Rosa County Health Department, Epidemiology program at (850) 983-5200 x105 or x140.

