

Chikungunya Fact Sheet

...Team information from But God Ministries



General Information:

Official Name: *Chikungunya fever (Chick-unn-goonyah); some have nicknamed it Chik V.*

Description: *It is a temporary onset of pain in the joints, fever, a rash, and in rare cases, bleeding and nervous system symptoms. The illness is caused by a viral infection called the **Alphavirus**.*

How do you get it? *It is caused by a virus you get when you are bitten by a mosquito carrying the virus.*

Is it contagious? *It can be passed from a human to mosquito and then from that mosquito to another human. The mosquito can only get the virus from someone between two to five days after someone gets the virus.*

How long does the illness last? *You don't normally see symptoms until between two and ten days after you get the virus, and it will last several days and may reappear several days after the symptoms seem to go away. The joint pain may persist longer than the other symptoms. The symptoms seem to be more severe and prolonged in people who have pre-existing medical conditions.*

Who is most at risk? *Elderly adults and young children have the highest risk for contracting the virus and show more acute symptoms. Diabetes and pre-existing hypertension, in particular, have been associated with more severe symptoms. Women who are pregnant should not put themselves or their unborn child at risk as the virus is reported to be able to pass from mother to fetus and cause potential risk to the unborn child.*

How do you treat the illness? *Take non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs like Tylenol (acetaminophen), Advil (ibuprofen), or Aleve (naproxen sodium), and then get bed rest. Be sure to drink plenty of water as well.*

**It is extremely important that all missionaries to Hope Center take this virus seriously and take responsibility for keeping up with prevention measures so as not to become infected while serving.*

Prevention:

If you are planning to be in a part of the world where Chikungunya is prevalent, you need to be prepared to prevent yourself from being bitten by a mosquito that is carrying the virus.

Any mosquito spray or wipe with deet is useful in protecting yourself from being bitten by mosquitoes.

Wipes are good because you can apply evenly to exposed skin without most of it blowing away.

You can also plan to wear long pants and long-sleeve shirts to reduce the amount of exposed skin.

Some people have used alternative methods successfully such as dryer sheets and essential oils applied to exposed skin. Oils good to use are lemongrass, lemon, eucalyptus, and peppermint oil.

