

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



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Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

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**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CONFIRMS FIRST LOCALLY ACQUIRED
CASES OF CHIKUNGUNYA FEVER**

- ~ Drain standing water to stop mosquitoes from multiplying ~
- ~ Cover skin with clothing or repellent ~
- ~ Cover doors and windows with screens to keep mosquitoes out ~

TALLAHASSEE – The Florida Department of Health today confirmed the first cases of locally acquired chikungunya (chik-en-gun-ye) fever, one in Miami Dade County and the other in Palm Beach County. Chikungunya is a disease spread by bites from infected *Aedes aegypti* or *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes. If a person is infected and bitten by a mosquito, that mosquito may later spread the infection by biting another person. Chikungunya is not contagious from person to person, is typically not life threatening and will likely resolve on its own.

“The Department has been conducting statewide monitoring for signs of any locally acquired cases of chikungunya.” said Dr. Anna Likos, State Epidemiologist and Disease Control and Health Protection Director. “We encourage everyone to take precautions against mosquitoes to prevent chikungunya and other mosquito-borne diseases by draining standing water, covering your skin with clothing and repellent and covering doors and windows with screens.”

Aedes mosquitoes are day biters which can lay eggs in very small water containers. Early detection of the symptoms and preventing mosquitoes from multiplying and biting will help prevent the disease.

Symptoms of chikungunya include sudden onset of high fever (>102⁰F), severe joint pain mainly in the arms and legs, headache, muscle pain, back pain and rash. Symptoms appear on average three to seven days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Most patients feel better after a few days or weeks, however, some people may develop long-term effects. Complications are more common in infants younger than a year old; those older than 65; and people with chronic conditions such as diabetes and hypertension.

If you experience symptoms of chikungunya fever, consult with your health care provider immediately and protect yourself against further mosquito bites. A person infected with chikungunya should stay indoors as much as possible until symptoms subside to prevent further transmission. Avoiding mosquito bites while you are sick will help to protect others from getting infected. Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than two months.

Chikungunya fever does not often result in death; however, some individuals may experience persistent joint pain. There is currently no vaccine or medication to prevent chikungunya fever.

DRAIN standing water to stop mosquitoes from multiplying.

- Drain water from garbage cans, house gutters, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flower pots or any other containers where sprinkler or rain water has collected.
- Discard old tires, drums, bottles, cans, pots and pans, broken appliances and other items that aren't being used.
- Empty and clean birdbaths and pet's water bowls at least once or twice a week.

Florida Department of Health

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- Protect boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that don't accumulate water.
- Maintain swimming pools in good condition and appropriately chlorinated. Empty plastic swimming pools when not in use.

COVER skin with clothing or repellent.

- Wear shoes, socks, long pants and long-sleeves.
- Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing.
- Always use repellents according to the label. Repellents with DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus and IR3535 are effective.

COVER doors and windows with screens to keep mosquitoes out.

- Keep mosquitoes out of your house. Repair broken screens on windows, doors, porches, and patios.

To learn more about the chikungunya virus, visit www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/mosquito-borne-diseases/chikungunya.html.

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