

Japanese encephalitis virus

Social media pack

OFFICIAL

Overview

Japanese encephalitis virus (JE virus) has been detected in Victoria for the first time. JE virus is a rare but potentially serious infection of the brain caused by a virus spread to humans through mosquito bites.

The virus is mostly spread to humans from pigs via mosquito bites and cannot be spread from human to human. It also cannot be spread by eating pork.

A comprehensive response across human and animal health sectors is underway in Victoria and to implement control measures. Examples of this response include; vaccinating those at risk, surveillance of animals for JE virus, public health information, and mosquito testing and control activities.

The Department of Health has developed this social media pack to support other departments and key stakeholder groups to promote important prevention messages to protect the community.

Website

The Beat the Bite website on the Better Health Channel: <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/beat-the-bite> provides information about mosquito borne diseases and mosquito bite prevention for the general public. Please share this link in all messages to the community.

Key messages

Japanese encephalitis



- Japanese encephalitis virus is a rare but potentially serious infection of the brain caused by a virus spread through mosquito bites.

- While 99% of cases will have no symptoms, those that do develop symptoms may experience a fever and headache, or more serious symptoms like nausea, vomiting or seizures.
- Japanese encephalitis has been detected for the first time in Victoria, with main areas of concern being along the Murray and in northern Victoria.
- While it is important to be aware of the presence of JE virus in specific geographic areas, the risk of contracting JE and developing serious illness still remains low. However, anyone being bitten by mosquitoes in these areas is potentially at risk
- Children aged under 5 years old and older people who are infected with JE virus are at a higher risk of developing more severe illness, such as encephalitis.
- For more information see your GP or phone NURSE-ON-CALL on 1300 606 024, or go to <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/japanese-encephalitis>

Mosquito bite prevention

- Victorians are being reminded to protect themselves from mosquito bites particularly when we are spending time outdoors.
- If you're spending time in northern Victoria or the Murray region, or spending time outdoors - don't forget to pack mosquito repellent that contains DEET or picaridin.
- There are simple steps to avoid mozzie bites and protect themselves and their family against mosquito-borne diseases.
- People should wear long, loose fitting clothes and use mosquito repellent containing picaridin or DEET on all exposed skin.
- Ensure that insect screens fitted to doors and windows around the home or in caravans are in good condition, or insect flaps on tents are intact and closed.
- Heavy rainfall, floods, high tides and warm weather increase mosquito numbers.
- Reduce mosquito breeding sites by getting rid of stagnant water around the home or campsites.
- A range of information relating to protecting against mosquito bites is available on the Beat the Bite campaign page on the Better Health Channel at <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/beat-the-bite>

Social media

Text	Image thumbnail (use attachment)
<p>Japanese encephalitis virus (JE virus) has been detected in Victoria for the first time.</p> <p>JE virus is a rare but potentially serious infection of the brain caused by a virus spread through mosquito bites. If you have JE, you most likely won't have symptoms. But if you have been in contact with mosquitoes and develop a sudden high fever and headache in the following days and weeks, see your doctor. If you have more serious symptoms like disorientation or a seizure - urgently seek medical attention.</p> <p>Children under 5 and older people have a higher risk of developing more severe illness, like encephalitis.</p> <p>Take precautions to avoid mosquito bites around your home and yard, when you're on holidays and spending time outdoors.</p> <p>Learn about simple steps to beat the bite: www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/beat-the-bite</p>	
<p>⚠ Mozzie alert ⚠</p> <p>Mosquitos can carry diseases like Japanese Encephalitis, which can make you really ill.</p> <p>If you're spending time in the great outdoors – particularly in northern Victoria and the Murray region, protect yourself from mosquitoes and the diseases they may carry.</p> <p>The best way to protect yourself and your family is to avoid being bitten by mozzies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mozzies can bite through tight clothing. Cover up - wear long, loose-fitting clothes. ✓ Use repellents that contain picaridin or DEET on all exposed skin. ✓ Use mosquito nets or insect screens. ✓ Use 'knockdown' fly spray, mosquito coils or plug-in repellent where you gather to sit or eat. ✓ If mosquito numbers are high, limit activity outdoors and move indoors if possible. ✓ Remove mozzie breeding sites like stagnant water around your accommodation or property. 	

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<p>Tip – citronella candles aren't effective enough! Mozzie repellents are your best defence against mosquito bites.</p> <p>If you have been in contact with mosquitoes and develop a sudden high fever and headache in the following days and weeks, see your doctor. If you have more serious symptoms like disorientation or a seizure - urgently seek medical attention.</p> <p>Find out how to mozzie-proof your home and holiday at www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/mosquitoes-protect-your-holiday-checklist</p>	