

# Dengue Fever Facts

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is Dengue Fever?

Dengue Fever is a vector-borne disease, that is, it can only be spread from a bite by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, more commonly known as the Dengue mosquito. The mosquito is found in tropical North Queensland, including townships in the Whitsunday Region.

### What are the symptoms of Dengue Fever?

Although Dengue Fever can have many combinations of symptoms, the more common symptoms are:

- sudden fever and extreme tiredness
- intense headache (especially behind the eyes)
- muscle and joint pain
- loss of appetite
- vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain
- a metallic taste in the mouth
- red or macular (small, flat red spots) rash occurs in half of cases
- minor bleeding from nose and gums

### Are there different types of Dengue Fever?

There are four different types of Dengue Fever (Dengue 1, 2, 3 and 4), all of which show similar signs and symptoms. If a person contracts one type of dengue fever, they become immune to that type, however may still become sick from any of the remaining three types. Contracting Dengue more than once increases the risk of developing Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever which, in severe cases, may be fatal.

### Can I catch Dengue Fever from somebody else?

No, not directly such as in the case of the flu. The disease can be spread from person to person via the Dengue mosquito *Aedes aegypti* biting people.

### Is Dengue Fever common in the Whitsunday region?

No. The Whitsunday Region very rarely has any cases of Dengue Fever in the area. Any past cases have been imported cases, that is, somebody has caught the disease from somewhere else and returned to the area with the disease. To date, there have been no locally acquired cases of Dengue Fever, however there is always a risk that this will occur.

### What can I do to ensure I do not catch Dengue Fever?

The best thing you can do to stop the disease is to ensure that your house and yard are not a breeding ground for mosquitoes.

The Dengue mosquito prefers to breed in containers around the house and home (not in drains, creeks, rivers or any other source). At least once a week during the wet season and after rain in the dry season, inspect your property and tip out any containers holding water and either throw them away or store in a dry place. Containers such as bird baths and pet drinking bowls should be cleaned and emptied at least twice a week.

### Where can I get further information?

Contact us on 1300 972 753, or visit <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/>