



My Health
Digest

Yellow Fever

Overview:

- Yellow fever is an acute viral hemorrhagic disease transmitted by infected mosquitoes.
- Yellow fever occurs when infected people introduce the virus into heavily populated areas with high mosquito density, and where most people have little or no immunity, due to lack of immunization.
- A small proportion of patients who contract the virus develop symptoms. It can cause problems with the liver and kidneys and result in bleeding.
- The symptoms can be treated with rest, drinking fluids and taking painkillers and medications to alleviate the fever.
- Yellow fever is prevented by an extremely effective vaccine, which is safe and affordable. A single dose of yellow fever vaccine is sufficient to grant sustained immunity and life-long protection against yellow fever disease.



Symptoms

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches, particularly in your back and knees
- Sensitivity to light
- Nausea, vomiting or both
- Loss of appetite
- Dizziness
- Red eyes, face or tongue

Most patients see an improvement in their health within 3-4 days.

A small percentage of patients enter a second, more toxic phase within 24 hours of recovering from initial symptoms. The symptoms include:

- Return of the fever
- Liver and kidneys being affected
- Dark urine
- Stomachache with vomiting
- Bleeding in the mouth, nose, eyes or stomach



When to see a doctor?

- When symptoms of yellow fever appear while traveling in areas where the infection is prevalent
- When symptoms appear upon the return from an endemic country

Diagnosis:

- Medical history
- Travel history
- Laboratory tests

Treatment

No antiviral medications have proved helpful in treating yellow fever. As a result, treatment consists primarily of supportive care in a hospital. This includes providing fluids and oxygen, maintaining adequate blood pressure, replacing blood loss, providing dialysis for kidney failure, and treating any other infections that develop. Some people receive transfusions of plasma to replace blood proteins that improve clotting.



Prevention:

- The yellow fever vaccine is safe, affordable and a single dose provides life-long protection against yellow fever disease. A booster dose of yellow fever vaccine might be needed in areas where the disease is continuously prevalent and if it has been over 10 years since it was last taken.
- Avoid traveling to yellow fever endemic countries.
- Avoid stagnant ponds and backfill them to get rid of mosquito breeding and spread.
- Spray rooms with insecticide to kill the mosquitoes inside them in affected areas.
- Wear garments that provide good body coverage to avoid mosquito bites, such as: Long-sleeve shirts, pants, and socks. These are best worn when you leave the house.
- Use insect repellents and mosquito nets.

