

DENGUE FEVER



VIRAL WEAPON AGAINST HUMAN BEINGS

An arboviral infectious disease that is transmitted by mosquitoes and that is self-limiting leading to high fever and discomfort

Information Booklet: Developed by Beenish Alvi

WARNING

Take Paracetamol , not aspirin. Use daytime insect precautions to reduce risk

ORIGEN OF DENGUE FEVER

The origins of the word dengue are not clear, but one theory is that it is derived from the Swahili phrase "Ka-dinga pepo", meaning "cramp-like seizure caused by an evil spirit". The Swahili word "dinga" may possibly have its origin in the Spanish word "dengue" meaning fastidious or careful, which would describe the gait of a person suffering the bone pain of dengue fever.. Slaves in the West Indies who contracted dengue were said to have the posture and gait of a dandy, and the disease was known as "Dandy Fever".

The first record of a case of probable dengue fever is in a Chinese medical encyclopedia from the Jin Dynasty (265–420 AD) which referred to a “water poison” associated with flying insects. The first recognized Dengue epidemics occurred almost simultaneously in Asia, Africa, and North America in the 1780s, shortly after the identification and naming of the disease in 1779.

- ✦ Cairo and Alexandria (Egypt, 1799);
- ✦ Jakarta (the called Batavia, Indonesia, 1799);
- ✦ Philadelphia (United States, 1780);
- ✦ Madras (India, 1780).

The first confirmed case report dates from 1789 and is by Benjamin Rush, who coined the term "breakbone fever" because of the symptoms of myalgia and arthralgia.

POSSIBLE CAUSES OF DISEASE

Dengue fever is a disease caused by a family of viruses that are transmitted by mosquitoes. Possible factors for dengue fever spread include:

- ✦ Unplanned urban overpopulation of areas leading to inadequate housing and public health systems (water, sewerage and waste management)
- ✦ Poor vector control, e.g., stagnant pools of water for mosquito breeding
- ✦ Climate change and viral evolution (increased virus transmission has been linked to El Nino conditions)
- ✦ Increased international travel (recreational, business or military) to endemic areas

All of these factors must be addressed to control the spread of dengue. Unplanned urbanization is believed to have had the largest impact on disease amplification in individual countries, whereas travel is believed to have had the largest impact on global spread

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES

- ✈ Keep your home and offices safe from mosquitoes.
- ✈ Use nets at doors and windows.
- ✈ Wear full sleeves clothes.
- ✈ Use mosquito nets while sleeping at night.
- ✈ Keep the water tanks and water containers covered.
- ✈ Try to avoid gathering water in front of your house or office
- ✈ Try to keep your homes and streets clean.
- ✈ Use mosquito repellent all over your body specially at morning and night time.
- ✈ Spray your homes and work places with mosquito sprays.

DIAGNOSING DENGUE

The diagnosis of dengue fever is usually made when a patient exhibits the typical clinical symptoms of headache, fever, eye pain, severe muscle aches and petechial rash and has a history of being in an area where dengue fever is endemic. Dengue fever can be difficult to diagnose because its symptoms overlap with those of many other viral illnesses, such as West Nile virus and chikungunya fever

SYMPTOMS OF DENGUE

After being bitten by a mosquito carrying the virus, the incubation period ranges from three to 15 (usually five to eight) days before the signs and symptoms of dengue appear in stages. Dengue starts with chills, headache, pain upon moving the eyes, and low backache. Painful aching in the legs and joints occurs during the first hours of illness. The temperature rises quickly as high as 104 F (40 C), with relatively low heart rate (bradycardia) and low blood pressure (hypotension). The eyes become reddened. A flushing or pale pink rash comes over the face and then disappears. The glands (lymph nodes) in the neck and groin are often swollen.

Fever and other signs of dengue last for two to four days, followed by a rapid drop in body temperature (defervescence) with profuse sweating. This precedes a period with normal temperature and a sense of well-being that lasts about a day. A second rapid rise in temperature follows. A characteristic rash appears along with the fever and spreads from the extremities to cover the entire body except the face. The palms and soles may be bright red and swollen

TREATMENT OF DENGUE FEVER

Because dengue fever is caused by a virus, there is no specific medicine or antibiotic to treat it. For typical dengue, the treatment is purely concerned with relief of the symptoms. Rest and fluid intake for adequate hydration is important. Aspirin and non steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs should only be taken under a doctor's supervision because of the possibility of worsening bleeding complications. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) and codeine may be given for severe headache and for joint and muscle pain (myalgia).