

# A common effort: Controlling the risk of Chikungunya

## Information to the general public



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# What is Chikungunya?

- Chikungunya is a virus that is transmitted from human to human mainly by infected *Aedes albopictus* and *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes (later referred to as **Aedes mosquitoes**)
- Chikungunya causes sudden onset of high fever, severe joint pain, muscle pain and headache
- As **no vaccine or medication** is currently available to prevent or cure the infection, control of Chikungunya involves measures to limit the number of mosquitoes that spread the virus and encouraging people to avoid mosquito bites

# Symptoms

- Symptoms include:

- Sudden onset of high fever
- Severe joint pain
- Muscle pain
- Headaches

- The symptoms will appear on average 4 to 7 days (but can range from 1 to 12 days) after being bitten by an infected *Aedes* mosquito

# Transmission

## How do humans become infected?

- Chikungunya virus is spread among humans mainly by the bites of infected *Aedes* mosquitoes
- These mosquito types are characterised by white stripes on their black bodies and legs
- The next slide shows a map of areas where mosquitoes infected with Chikungunya virus are present



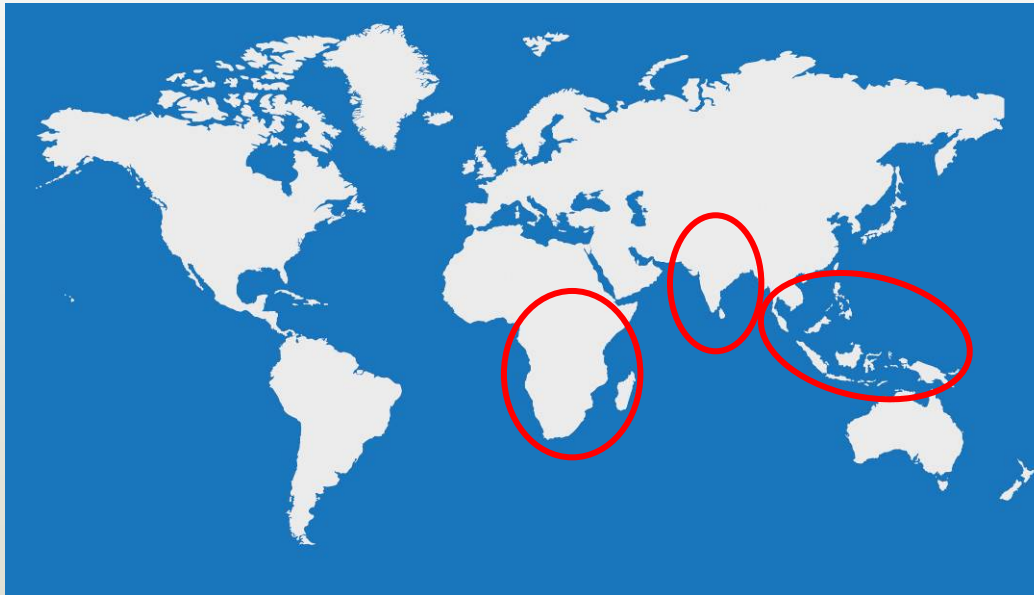
*Aedes albopictus*

# Epidemiology

## Chikungunya risk zones

Outbreaks of Chikungunya virus are usually found in:

- Africa
- Southeast Asia
- Indian subcontinent and islands in the Indian Ocean



# Epidemiology

## Presence of *Aedes* mosquitoes

The increasing presence of *Aedes* mosquitoes in Southern continental Europe has made outbreaks of Chikungunya a new health risk in these regions



# Preventive measures

## Seeking protection from Chikungunya

### When staying in affected areas:

- **Wear long-sleeved** shirts and long trousers
- **Use mosquito repellents, coils or other devices** that will help fend off mosquitoes
- If possible, sleep under **bed nets** pre-treated with insecticides
- If possible, set the **air-conditioning** to a low temperature at night – mosquitoes do not like cold temperatures
- Pregnant women, children under 12 years old, and people with immune disorders or severe chronic illnesses should be given personalised advice by a medical doctor





## What should I do if I suspect that I have Chikungunya?

People experiencing sudden onset of high fever, severe joint pain, muscle pain and headaches and who have been in a Chikungunya risk zone or in a geographical area where *Aedes* mosquitoes are present within the past 15 days should:

- **see a doctor** who can make the correct diagnosis
- **limit the risk of further mosquito bites**, as this is critical to prevent further transmission of the Chikungunya virus (see previous slide)

# What should I do if I suspect that I have Chikungunya?

## Treatment

- Infected persons should avoid further mosquito bites in order to prevent further transmission (e.g. use of repellents or sleeping under bed nets as much as possible)
- As there is no treatment for Chikungunya fever, the doctor will prescribe symptomatic treatment only

# Community measures

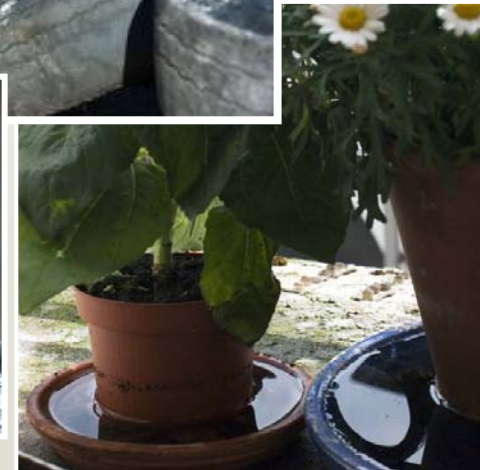
## Reducing the spread of *Aedes* mosquitoes

- *Aedes* mosquitoes live in a number of different environments
- The presence of water is of great importance for mosquitoes' breeding as their eggs require water in order to develop into adult mosquitoes



To reduce the breeding sites, avoid water gathering in open containers in your communities and in the vicinity of your home

- **Avoid water left over in open containers such as flower pots, drain pipes, wading pools, watering cans and tyres**



## Links / contacts

For more information on Chikungunya, please consult the ECDC website:

[http://ecdc.europa.eu/Health\\_topics/Chikungunya\\_Fever/Chikungunya\\_Fever.html](http://ecdc.europa.eu/Health_topics/Chikungunya_Fever/Chikungunya_Fever.html)