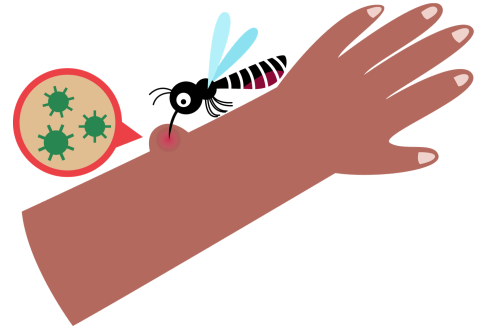


# Chikungunya: What you need to know

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## What is chikungunya?

Chikungunya is an infectious mosquito-borne illness. The mosquitoes that transmit the disease usually bite during the daytime, especially at dusk and dawn, so the risk of infection is higher when spending time outdoors during these hours.



Chikungunya is most commonly found in tropical and subtropical regions. The risk of infection depends on the level of virus activity in a given area; for example, people traveling to locations experiencing an outbreak or epidemic are at higher risk. Outside of outbreak settings, the overall risk of chikungunya infection among travellers is usually low.

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## What are the symptoms?

Common symptoms of chikungunya include fever and severe joint pain, which can feel similar to arthritis. Other symptoms may include rash, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, headache, and muscle pain. Symptoms usually begin 3 to 7 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito, but can take up to 12 days to appear. Many people recover within a few days; however, 50% of people experience severe joint pain that can last for weeks or even months.

While rare, serious cases of chikungunya can sometimes affect the eyes, heart, stomach, intestines and nervous system (brain, spinal cord, and nerves). People at higher risk of severe infection include infants, older adults, and people with long-term medical conditions, such as diabetes or high blood pressure.

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## What are the treatment options?

There is no specific treatment for chikungunya. Treatment focuses on relieving symptoms, such as pain, fever, and inflammation.

# Chikungunya: What you need to know

## How do you prevent chikungunya?

Taking steps to prevent mosquito bites when travelling to affected areas is strongly recommended.

### Tips on mosquito bite prevention:

- **Avoid peak mosquito activity when possible:** Limit outdoor activities at dusk and dawn, particularly in rural or forested areas.
- **Use insect repellent properly:** Apply an approved insect repellent with a Pest Control Products (PCP) registration number. Reinforce the importance of following label directions, including age-specific precautions and reapplication timing.
- **Wear protective clothing:** Wear loose-fitting, light-coloured clothing made from tightly woven fabrics (e.g., nylon or polyester). Long sleeves, long pants, socks, and closed-toe shoes provide additional protection.
- **Use physical barriers:** Use mosquito netting when sleeping outdoors or in accommodations without screened windows or air conditioning.
- **Ensure accommodations are protected:** Choose accommodations with intact window and door screens. Travellers staying longer should inspect living spaces for gaps or damaged screens and arrange repairs if possible.
- **Reduce indoor mosquito exposure:** Using tools such as fly swatters or electric traps indoors can help reduce mosquito presence.



In Canada, a **chikungunya vaccine** is approved for use in some travellers, depending on individual risk factors.

Travellers are encouraged to consult a healthcare professional or visit a travel health clinic at least 6 weeks before travelling to receive personalized health advice and vaccine recommendations.

# Chikungunya: What you need to know



## Who should get the chikungunya vaccine?

The live attenuated chikungunya vaccine (**Chik-LAV**) is **generally not recommended for adults aged 18 to 64 years**. However, following an **individualized risk assessment and discussion with a healthcare provider** regarding the potential benefits and risks, Chik-LAV **may be considered for adults aged 18 to 64 years** who are at high risk of infection.

The discussion should consider the following:

- exposure to chikungunya (travel destination, length of travel, frequency of trips to areas where chikungunya is a risk)
- risk factors for severe and/or persistent chikungunya disease and vaccine-associated serious adverse events (SAE)

Adolescents aged 12 to 17 years have been approved to receive the vaccine; however, specific clinical guidance for this age group is not yet available.



## Who should NOT get the vaccine?

The chikungunya vaccine is **not** recommended for the following populations:

- adults aged 65 years and older
- pregnant and breastfeeding people
- immunocompromised individuals

For these populations, avoiding travel to areas experiencing a chikungunya outbreak is advised whenever possible, due to a higher risk of severe infection. If travel cannot be avoided, an individualized risk assessment and shared decision-making with a healthcare provider are recommended.

## Are you protected against chikungunya?



Talk to your healthcare provider or visit a travel health clinic to discuss how to protect yourself or your children from chikungunya when travelling, and whether the vaccine may be a suitable option for you.

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