



LA CROSSE ENCEPHALITIS VIRUS (LACV) FACT SHEET

WHAT IS LA CROSSE ENCEPHALITIS VIRUS (LACV)?

La Crosse encephalitis is a rare disease that is caused by a virus spread by infected mosquitoes. LACV can cause inflammation of the brain (encephalitis). Most cases of LACV disease occur in the upper Midwestern and mid-Atlantic and southeastern states. Severe disease occurs most often in children under the age of 16.

HOW DO YOU GET LA CROSSE ENCEPHALITIS VIRUS (LACV)?

Infected mosquitoes can spread the virus to people through bites. Most people become infected from the “treehole mosquito” (*Aedes triseriatus*). These mosquitos are most active during daytime- from dawn till dusk.

SYMPTOMS

Most people infected with LACV have no apparent symptoms. Symptoms typically appear 5 to 15 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Initial symptoms in those who become ill may include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Tiredness

TREATMENT

There is no specific treatment for LACV infection— care is based on symptoms. Discuss treatment options with your doctor.

PREVENTION

The best method to avoid infection is to prevent mosquito bites:

Dump standing water around your home once a week.

Use insect repellent.

Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.

Use screens on windows and doors. Repair any holes.

DGHD EFFORTS

Reports of suspected and confirmed cases of disease are made to the Delaware General Health District (DGHD). The DGHD investigates potential sources of illness, conducts surveillance for the spread of disease, and engages in community outreach and education. The DGHD regularly trap and test mosquito populations and fog areas where human disease is confirmed.