

# CDRS

## COMMUNICABLE DISEASE FACT SHEET **ENCEPHALITIS** (ARBOVIRAL ENCEPHALITIS INFECTIONS)

Communicable Disease Reporting System

These infections are caused by any of a number of viruses transmitted by insects such as mosquitoes and ticks. These infections generally occur during warm weather months when mosquitoes are active. The term encephalitis refers to an inflammation of the brain. The most common diseases in this category are Eastern equine encephalitis, Western equine encephalitis, St. Louis encephalitis, and La Crosse encephalitis.

### Symptoms

- Symptoms of the various types of viral infections transmitted by mosquitoes are usually similar but differ in severity.
- Most infections do not result in any symptoms.
- Mild cases can occur with only a slight fever and/or headache.
- Severe infections are marked by a rapid onset of headache, high fever, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, and infrequently, paralysis or death.

### Transmission

- These infections are spread by the bites from infected mosquitoes.

### Treatment

- The symptoms will usually be treated.
- There is no specific antibiotic treatment available to humans.

### Prevention

- Limiting exposure to mosquitoes reduces the likelihood of an Arboviral infection. It is unreasonable to assume that a person can completely eliminate activities that may result in mosquito exposure. Therefore, prevention measures should be aimed at personal protection:
- Wear light-colored clothing — this is less of an attraction to mosquitoes. Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts
- Apply repellents to exposed skin. Repellents with no more than 30% active ingredients are recommended for adults. Children should use repellents with about 10% active ingredients. Campers should consider the use of head nets or bed nets.
- It is important to clean up areas around households and other locations where children play. Fill tree holes and remove any receptacles that hold water and can provide places for mosquitoes to breed.

### Additional Information

An infection with one of these viruses can provide immunity to that specific virus and perhaps to other related viruses. Animals may be vaccinated to prevent some of these diseases.

**All information is general in nature and is not intended to be used as a substitute for appropriate professional advice.**

Franklin County



Board of Health

Report Disease With Ease - 24 hours a day

[www.cdrsinfo.com](http://www.cdrsinfo.com)

Columbus and Franklin County Communicable Disease Reporting System

c/o The Franklin County Board of Health, 280 East Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43215

(614) 719-8888 ♦ (614) 719-8890 fax ♦ [cdrs@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:cdrs@franklincountyohio.gov) - email

