



## Japanese Encephalitis Frequently Asked Questions

Georgia Department of Human Resources, Division of Public Health  
Updated 9/09/05

### ***What is Japanese encephalitis?***

Japanese encephalitis is a disease caused by the Japanese encephalitis virus. This virus is transmitted to humans by the bite of an infected mosquito. Japanese encephalitis is not spread person-to-person.

### ***How is Japanese encephalitis spread?***

Japanese encephalitis is transmitted to people by the bite of a rice field breeding mosquito (primarily the *Culex tritaeniorhynchus* group) that is infected with the Japanese encephalitis virus. The mosquito becomes infected with the Japanese encephalitis virus when feeding on domestic pigs and wild birds infected with the virus. Infected mosquitoes then transmit the Japanese encephalitis virus to humans and animals when feeding on them.

### ***What are the symptoms of Japanese encephalitis?***

Mild infections can occur with fever and/or headache. More severe infection is marked by quick onset, headache, high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, occasional convulsions (especially in infants) and spastic (rarely flaccid) paralysis. A majority of infections are asymptomatic or mild. The incubation period for Japanese encephalitis is 5-15 days

\*If you have any concerns about your health, you should contact your healthcare provider.

### ***What is the treatment for Japanese encephalitis?***

There is no specific treatment for Japanese encephalitis. Intensive supportive therapy is indicated.

### ***Is there a vaccine for Japanese encephalitis?***

There is a vaccine available to protect residents and travelers to areas where Japanese encephalitis is endemic or epidemic. See CDC Health Information for Travelers to Southeast Asia (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>) for more information on who should seek vaccination.

### ***Who is at risk for getting Japanese encephalitis?***

Residents of rural areas in Southeast Asia especially areas in endemic locations, active duty military deployed to endemic areas, and expatriates who visit rural areas are at risk for getting Japanese encephalitis. Japanese encephalitis does not usually occur in urban areas. See CDC Traveler's Health website (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>) to determine what areas are currently at risk for Japanese encephalitis transmission. The World Health Organization's webpage for Disease Outbreak News (<http://www.who.int/csr/don/en/>) is another good resource to consult for information on outbreaks of Japanese encephalitis throughout the world.

### ***How concerned should I be about Japanese encephalitis in Georgia?***

Japanese encephalitis is extremely rare in Georgia and would only arrive by way of a person who returned to the United States from an affected area in Southeast Asia. There has never been a case of locally acquired Japanese encephalitis reported in Georgia.

### ***How can I prevent myself from being infected with Japanese encephalitis?***

Although Japanese encephalitis vaccination is very effective against developing infection, travelers should still avoid mosquito bites to reduce the risk of other vector-borne infectious diseases. Travelers should be advised to stay in screened or air-conditioned rooms, to use bed nets when such quarters are unavailable, to use area aerosol insecticides and mosquito coils as necessary, and to use personal insect repellents containing DEET and protective clothing to avoid mosquito bites



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***I am traveling to an area where Japanese encephalitis vaccination is suggested, where in Georgia can I get vaccinated against Japanese encephalitis?***

See <http://health.state.ga.us/programs/immunization/yellow.asp> for a list of travel health clinics by city that can offer numerous travel vaccines including yellow fever and Japanese encephalitis. For travel clinics outside of Georgia, see [http://www.cdc.gov/travel/travel\\_clinics.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/travel_clinics.htm).

***Whom should I contact for more information?***

For general information about Japanese encephalitis and surveillance for mosquito-borne diseases in Georgia, call your county health department or the Georgia Department of Human Resources, Division of Public Health at 404-657-2588. You may also visit the Georgia Division of Public Health website at <http://health.state.ga.us/epi/vbd/mosquito.asp>.

For information about Japanese encephalitis, visit The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Japanese encephalitis website at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/jencephalitis/index.htm>.

For international information on Japanese encephalitis, visit the World Health Organization's Japanese encephalitis website at [http://www.who.int/topics/encephalitis\\_viruses\\_japanese/en/](http://www.who.int/topics/encephalitis_viruses_japanese/en/).