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## **Southern California Experiencing Increase in Cases of Locally Acquired Dengue**

*Invasive Aedes aegypti mosquitoes now commonly found in Riverside County*

**Riverside County, CA:** Southern California is experiencing an increase in cases of locally acquired dengue. A total of nine human cases of locally acquired dengue have been reported by Los Angeles and San Diego County Public Health in 2024. In California, almost all reported cases of dengue are in people who were infected by mosquitoes while traveling in other parts of the world. Currently, local transmission of dengue in California is very rare. **There are no reported cases of locally acquired dengue in Riverside County.**

Dengue is primarily transmitted through the bite of an infected *Aedes* mosquito, a mosquito now common in Southern California. *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes are small (about ¼ inch), black and white, and feed almost exclusively on humans, biting aggressively all day long. To help eliminate this mosquito, residents must eliminate all possible standing water sources around their homes. "With fall temperatures, we often spend more time outdoors. This mosquito is also active in the fall months, making it more likely people will be bitten. Wearing repellent is essential to staying healthy," said Jeremy Wittie, General Manager for the Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District.

Travel-related dengue cases have increased due to ongoing outbreaks around the world. In the United States, public health authorities in Puerto Rico declared an outbreak in March 2024. Additionally, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a health alert advisory regarding the increased risk of dengue virus (DENV) infections in the United States in 2024.

### **What is Dengue Fever?**

Dengue is a viral disease caused by any of the four related viruses: dengue virus 1, 2, 3, and 4. Dengue viruses are spread to people through the bite of an infected *Aedes* mosquito. A person can be infected with dengue multiple times in their life. The most common dengue symptoms are fever with aches and pains (eye pain, typically behind the eyes, muscle, joint, or bone pain) nausea, vomiting, and rash.

If you feel you are experiencing dengue-related symptoms, please contact your primary care doctor.

**How residents can help reduce mosquitoes and prevent mosquito bites:**

- Dump and Drain Standing Water: Mosquitoes lay eggs in and near standing water. Mosquitoes only need a tablespoon of water to lay eggs. Potted plant saucers are the leading breeding source for the invasive *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. Limit the number of places mosquitoes can breed by dumping and draining items that hold water.
- Wear insect repellent. EPA-registered ingredients such as DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535 (as directed on the product label).
- Check window and door screens to prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.

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