



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. BOX 3378
HONOLULU, HI 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
File:

August 6, 2024

MEDICAL ADVISORY: DENGUE FEVER CASE IN HANA, MAUI

- DOH has confirmed a travel-related dengue virus case in Hana, Maui and has found conditions that could increase the risk of transmission in the area.
- Providers should consider dengue fever in persons presenting with compatible symptoms and who have spent time in Hana during the month of August.
- Urgently report all suspect dengue fever cases to the Disease Investigation Branch Disease reporting line at (808) 586-4586, do not wait for laboratory confirmation.
- Diagnostic PCR (within the first seven days of illness) and serologic testing for dengue virus can be performed at the State Laboratories Division.

Dear Healthcare Provider:

The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) has confirmed a travel-related dengue virus case in Hana, Maui. While no locally transmitted cases have been identified at this time, the DOH vector control team found conditions that could increase the risk of transmission from this travel-related case. The area experiences steady traffic of visitors and tourists, and dense populations of mosquitos were identified around the residence and the surrounding area. Vector control teams have responded and will continue to be active in the Hana area.

Dengue fever presents typically 5–7 (range 3–10) days after a bite by an infected mosquito. Symptoms include high fever, arthralgias, myalgias, severe headache, retro-orbital eye pain, maculopapular rash, and mild hemorrhagic manifestations (e.g., petechiae). Mild cases may have only a nonspecific febrile syndrome. Uncomplicated dengue fever resolves within 2–7 days. In some, symptoms can progress to severe dengue, which can be fatal and present after initial fevers resolve. Hemorrhage and extensive plasma leakage, requiring critical, aggressive supportive care and monitoring, are characteristic. Dengue can occasionally present with signs and symptoms of aseptic meningitis or encephalitis. Early laboratory values in dengue fever typically demonstrate leukopenia and thrombocytopenia; patients with severe dengue can have an abruptly increased hematocrit.

Providers should consider dengue fever in persons presenting with compatible symptoms and who have spent time in Hana during the month of August. Urgently report all suspect dengue fever cases to the Disease Investigation Branch.

- Dengue testing is recommended for anyone who lives in or traveled to [areas](#) where dengue virus is transmitted as well as Hana in the month of August and has recently experienced signs and symptoms of dengue illness.

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- Patients with symptoms consistent with dengue can be tested with both molecular and serologic diagnostic tests; dengue virus is typically present in blood or blood-derived fluids such as serum or plasma. Dengue virus RNA can be detected with molecular tests including [PCR testing available through DOH State Laboratories Division](#). After the initial symptomatic illness, which is typically lasts 7 days, PCR testing sensitivity and thus utility declines. However, during this period IgM antibodies are usually present and can be reliably detected by an IgM antibody test which should be included during this period.
- Dengue infection can cross-react with other mosquito-borne illnesses on serological testing. It is critical to **involve DOH as soon as possible to obtain polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing and/or serological testing**. Approval for laboratory testing should be coordinated with the Disease Investigation Branch (DIB) at (808) 586-4586 which will also provide direction on handling. Approved specimens for testing should be submitted directly to the State Lab Division (SLD) and not sent to commercial laboratories as this can significantly delay definitive testing and response.

Treatment for dengue infection is supportive; patients should be monitored for potential progression to severe dengue.

Individuals suspected or confirmed to have dengue fever should be instructed to stay indoors and avoid mosquito bites during their first week of illness (i.e., especially while febrile). *Everyone*, but especially those with dengue infection, should be encouraged to aggressively control and eliminate mosquitoes around their homes and businesses by eliminating areas of standing water. Windows and door screens should be checked for holes/tears and repaired. Individuals should use mosquito repellents containing 20–30% DEET and wear long sleeves and pants when possible.

Dengue fever is an urgently reportable disease. Report any clinically suspected case of dengue fever immediately to:

Oahu (Disease Reporting Line) (808) 586-4586
Maui District Health Office (808) 984-8213
Kauai District Health Office (808) 241-3563
Big Island District Health Office (Hilo) (808) 933-0912
Big Island District Health Office (Kona) (808) 322-4877
After hours on Oahu (808) 600-3625
After hours on neighbor islands (800) 360-2575 (toll free)

We appreciate your vigilance and assistance in protecting our communities from dengue fever.

Sincerely,



Sarah K. Kemble, M.D.
State Epidemiologist

Additional Resources

Signs and Symptoms: <https://www.cdc.gov/dengue/hcp/clinical-signs/index.html>

Diagnostic Testing: <https://www.cdc.gov/dengue/hcp/diagnosis-testing/index.html>

Specimen collection for submission to State Laboratories Division:

<https://health.hawaii.gov/statelab/files/2013/07/sld-brs-sr-dengue-pcr3.pdf>

<https://health.hawaii.gov/docd/files/2016/12/DengueIgM.pdf>

Current recommendations for treatment: <https://www.cdc.gov/dengue/hcp/clinical-care/>