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Department of Health reports travel-related dengue virus cases in Hawai'i

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) has received two reports of travel-related dengue cases in Hawai'i, one in Kaua'i County and one in Hawai'i County. Both cases were in individuals who had recent travel to countries where dengue is commonly found. The last confirmed case of locally acquired dengue in the state was in 2016.

Dengue virus is spread from person to person by mosquitos. In areas of suspected or confirmed dengue, Hawai'i DOH personnel are conducting inspections and mosquito-reducing activities. Reducing mosquito populations reduces the chances of dengue being transmitted to other people. In areas without reported dengue cases, eliminating mosquito breeding sites in and around your home is a good practice. Mosquitos only need small amounts of standing water to breed. Common breeding sites at home include buckets, water catching plants (such as bromeliads), small containers, planters, rain barrels or even cups left outside. Simply pouring out containers of standing water eliminates the potential for mosquito breeding.

While Hawai'i is home to the type of mosquitos that can carry dengue, the disease is not established (endemic) here in the state, and cases are currently only seen in travelers. Dengue outbreaks do occur in many parts of the world including Central and South America, Asia (including the Republic of the Philippines), the Middle East, Africa, some Pacific Islands (including the U.S. territories of American Samoa, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau) and in many popular tourist destinations in the Caribbean (including Puerto Rico).

Anyone who travels to an area with dengue is at risk for infection. Some countries are reporting increased numbers of cases, so it is important 4-6 weeks before you travel to review [country-specific travel information](#) for the most up to date guidance on dengue risk and prevention measures for that country. Currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advises travelers to practice usual precautions when traveling to areas of dengue risk to reduce your chances of mosquito bites. This includes using an [EPA-registered insect repellent](#), wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors, especially at dusk and dawn, and sleeping in an air-conditioned room or room with window screens or under an [insecticide-treated bed net](#). Travelers returning from an [area with risk of dengue](#) should take steps to [prevent mosquito bites](#) for 3 weeks, and if symptoms of dengue develop within 2 weeks upon return, should seek medical evaluation.

Symptoms of dengue may be mild or severe and include fever, nausea, vomiting, rash, and body aches. Symptoms typically last two to seven days and although severe and even life-threatening illness can occur, most people recover after about a week.

For more information, please visit the [Disease Outbreak Control Division \(DOCD\) website](#) and [Vector Control Branch \(VCB\) website](#).

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