

Alabama Department of Public Health
Alabama Emergency Response Technology (ALERT) Health Alert Network (HAN)

Chikungunya Virus in Alabama Residents

Current Situation

The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), Epidemiology Division (EPI), is investigating several suspected chikungunya cases, including two chikungunya clusters related to Haiti mission trips. ADPH Bureau of Clinical Laboratories (BCL) has tested many of these residents for West Nile virus, malaria, and dengue and all tests were negative. BCL has submitted ten Alabama residents' clinical specimens to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for chikungunya virus laboratory testing. As of July 2, 2014, 1 confirmed case and 4 preliminarily positive results for chikungunya virus have been reported in Alabama, and each of these has a history of travel to Haiti or the Caribbean.

Chikungunya virus infection should be considered in patients with acute onset of fever and polyarthralgia, especially travelers who recently returned from areas with known virus transmission. The symptoms of chikungunya are similar to those of dengue, another disease spread by mosquitoes.

Report

Chikungunya is an arboviral disease and a Standard Notification Notifiable Disease, and therefore must be reported to EPI within 7 days of suspected diagnosis. To report the suspected case, please go to www.adph.org/epi, REPORT Card.

Education

Educate all patients with suspected chikungunya to prevent further spread of the virus by avoiding mosquito bites, by applying DEET and/or staying indoors, during the first week of illness. A mosquito that bites an infected person can transmit the chikungunya virus when it bites another person.

Specimen Collection and Shipping

If you would like for specimens to be tested for chikungunya virus, follow the instructions below to properly collect and send to BCL for forwarding to CDC.

- Follow CDC's instructions for collecting and sending diagnostic specimens, <http://www.cdc.gov/ncecid/dvbd/specimensub/arboviral-shipping.html>.
- Complete CDC's Specimen Submission Form: Specimens of Human Origin, <http://www.cdc.gov/laboratory/specimen-submission/pdf/form-50-34.pdf>.

- Specimens may be dropped off at your local county health department to be couriered to BCL overnight or can be shipped directly to BCL at 8140 AUM Drive, Montgomery, AL 36117 (at your expense). Specimens for chikungunya will be forwarded to CDC.

If you would like BCL to test for dengue, report all suspected cases to EPI, and follow the instructions below.

- Collect serum specimens for dengue by using a gold or tiger top collection tube. Centrifuge specimen and transfer serum into a sterile tube. Ship in a Styrofoam box on frozen cold packs. If possible, freeze and pack on dry ice for shipping.
- Complete a BCL Requisition Form for each specimen and test ordered, http://www.adph.org/bcl/assets/BCL_Requisiton_Form.pdf. Include a date of symptom onset, as well as dates, locations of recent travel, and relevant vaccine history.
- Specimens may be dropped off at your local county health department to be couriered to BCL overnight or can be shipped directly to BCL at 8140 AUM Drive, Montgomery, AL 36117 (at your expense).

Resources

- For more information about chikungunya virus, see <http://www.cdc.gov/chikungunya>.
- If you have a question about reporting a suspected case, call EPI at 1-800-338-8374.
- If you have a question about specimen collection and shipping, call BCL at 334-260-3400.