

# Protecting against mosquito-borne diseases

Warm and wet weather can result in greater numbers of mosquitoes and increased risk of illnesses from mosquito bites. While the overall risk is low, some mosquitoes carry diseases that make people sick.

The best protection against mosquito-borne illness is to avoid mosquito bites.

Families can protect against mosquito bites by:

- covering up as much as possible with long, loose-fitting, light-coloured clothing
- applying insect repellent that contains picaridin or DEET on exposed skin when leaving home
- limiting outdoor activity if lots of mosquitoes are active.

Families with any health concerns should see their doctor or phone [NURSE-ON-CALL](#): 1300 606 024 (available 24 hours).

## Free Japanese encephalitis vaccines

Japanese encephalitis virus is spread to humans through bites from infected mosquitoes and can cause a rare but potentially serious infection of the brain.

Free Japanese encephalitis vaccines are available to protect Victorians at higher risk of the virus.

The Victorian Department of Health encourages eligible people who live or work in high-risk local government areas to get vaccinated.

For more information, including what is considered a high-risk area and eligibility for a free vaccine, refer to the Department of Health's [Japanese encephalitis webpage](#).

## Find out more

For more information on protecting against mosquito-borne diseases, families can refer to the following Better Health Channel pages:

- [Mosquitoes can carry diseases](#)
- [Protect yourself from mosquito-borne disease](#), including a handy checklist to help reduce mosquito breeding sites at home and [resources translated into other languages](#).