



JAMESTOWN CANYON VIRUS

What is Jamestown Canyon virus (JCV)?

Jamestown Canyon virus (JCV) is an emerging virus that is part of the California serogroup viruses and is spread to people by infected mosquitoes. JCV was first isolated from mosquitoes in 1961 and named for Jamestown Canyon, Colorado, where those mosquitoes were found.

Who gets JCV?

The virus is found throughout the United States, but most cases are reported from the upper Midwest. JCV can infect any age group, but people who work outside or participate in outdoor activities are at greater risk because of exposure to mosquitoes.

How is JCV spread?

JCV can be spread by many types of mosquitoes, which depend on the location and time of year. Snowmelt *Aedes* species are some mosquitoes that may spread the virus if infected. These mosquitoes lay their eggs in small water pools formed from melting snow in the spring. These snow pools are common in wooded areas. Mosquitoes become infected with JCV after feeding on infected deer and other mammals that have the virus in their blood.

What are the symptoms of JCV?

Most people infected with JCV do not have any symptoms. However, symptomatic people report initial symptoms of fever, fatigue, headache, sore throat, runny nose, or cough. JCV can also cause severe disease including encephalitis (infection of the brain) or meningitis (infection of the membranes around the brain and spinal cord). Symptoms of severe disease include stiff neck, confusion, loss of coordination, difficulty speaking, or seizures.

How soon do symptoms appear?

The time from mosquito bite to feeling sick (incubation period) ranges from a few days to 2 weeks.

Should an infected person be excluded from work or school?

An infected person does not need to be excluded from work or school.

How is JCV diagnosed?

Healthcare providers diagnose Jamestown Canyon virus infection based on signs and symptoms, history of possible exposure to the mosquitoes that can carry JCV, and laboratory testing of blood or spinal fluid.



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the treatment for JCV?

There is no treatment for JCV other than supportive care and hospitalization may be necessary for more serious cases.

What can a person or community do to prevent the spread of JCV?

The most important way to prevent your chances of developing JCV is to prevent mosquito bites. Take these recommended steps:

- Repair any tears or rips in window screens to prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.
- Clean leaves and debris from gutters, which can hold water if they are clogged.
- Recycle old tires, which are perfect habitats for mosquito larvae.
- Use netting over strollers, playpens, etc.
- Consider using EPA-registered mosquito repellents and apply them according to the product label.
- Wear loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts and pants.
- Tip and toss containers that are holding water.
- Turn containers and wheelbarrows over, so that they cannot collect water.
- Change the water in bird baths.
- Empty water from tarps that are covering items like boats, mulch, dirt, etc.

Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/jamestown-canyon/index.html>