

This update is produced by National Humanitarian Network which aims to provide a brief overview of Dengue situation prevailing in Pakistan.

Dengue Disease:

Dengue fever has become an important disease in Pakistan with increasing epidemics. It is an infectious disease of the tropics transmitted by striped Aedes i.e. aegypti and albopictus (The Asian Tiger), mosquitoes and is characterized by sudden fever and causing rash and aching head and joints. Dengue viruses occur in most tropical areas of the world. Dengue hemorrhagic fever is a more severe form of the viral illness. It also goes by other names, including “breakbone” or “dandy fever.” It takes only 5-7 days to become an Epidemic if the favorable conditions are there whether it is because of continuous rain or negligence of the stake holders. Highly urban constructed areas and old cities are more vulnerable to this.

Symptoms:

After being bitten by a mosquito carrying the virus, the incubation period ranges from three to 15 (usually five to eight) days before the signs and symptoms of dengue appear in stages. Dengue Fever starts with:

- chills
- headache
- pain upon moving the eyes
- pain at low backache
- painful aching in the legs and joints occurs during the first hours of illness
- temperature rises quickly as high as 104 F (40 C), with relatively low heart rate (bradycardia) and low blood pressure(hypotension).
- eyes become reddened
- flushing or pale pink rash comes over the face and then disappears
- glands (lymph nodes) in the neck and groin are often swollen
- characteristic rash appears along with the fever and spreads from the extremities to cover the entire body except the face
- palms and soles may be bright red and swollen
- fever and other signs of dengue last for two to four days, followed by a rapid drop in body temperature with profuse sweating. A second rapid rise in temperature follows

Because dengue fever is caused by a virus, there is no specific medicine or antibiotic to treat it. Also, there is currently no vaccine available for dengue fever. The prevention of dengue fever requires control or eradication of the mosquitoes that are carrying the virus that causes dengue.

Current Situation:

City	No of Patients Reported in Year 2013	No of Patients Reported in Year 2014	Hospitals
Lahore	183	39	Jinnah Hospital, Services Hospital, Mew Hospital
Rawalpindi	—	134 (confirm patients in last 10 days are 82)	Banazir Bhutto Hospital & Holy Family Hospital

Government, Non-Government & NHN Interventions:

Government of Pakistan and Provincial Government of Punjab are working on the preventive measures to reduce the spread of the epidemic. To facilitate the circulation on the signs and symptoms of dengue fever, reach for help for suspected cases and ultimately help identifying areas where the epidemic may have spread, the Government of Punjab has opened a hotline called “Punjab Health Line Project for Dengue” which can be reached at 0800-99000. Teams have been organized for the purpose of fumigating, spraying and fogging those areas where the Aedes mosquitoes have known to infect people with the virus. Directions are in place for spraying especially in educational institutes. The government has issued orders to take strict action against any people, organizations that do not observe to take the preventive measures. A Special Tribunal for dengue directly reports to the provincial government.

Punjab Government is improving their overall skills on the subject from 2011-Epidemic onwards and now a new effort “Prevention & Control of Dengue in Punjab” (SOPs) book is available online. According to these SOP whole UC shall be sweep out in 50 to 60 days and for this 2 to 3 teams (consist of 9 to 10 people) are supposed to be deployed for a particular UC. First survey will be considered sample surveillance survey and after 2 months accurate surveillance shall be conducted.

According to our source in Lahore three category models were adopted to sweep out this disease; which is categorized as:

- **Red category:** if patients are spotted in particular area than work force is engaged for 8 days and after 8 days survey is conducted to assess the situation
- **Yellow category:** if only larvae is found in particular area than work force is engaged for 20 days to sweep out the area from larvae
- **Green category:** where there are less chances of dengue than from 50 to 60 days sample surveillance survey will be conducted

Government of Punjab has also issued the “Punjab Prevention and Control of Dengue (temporary) Regulations, 2014” to ensure the prevention and eradication of dengue.

NHN is planning to design skill development programs for all provinces to eradicate this issue. NHN is also in process to engage key stakeholders to look into this matter.

Key Messages:

- Drain and dump standing water found in containers inside and around the house: pet dishes, flower pots, vases, buckets, tires, cans
- If containers cannot be drained or dumped out, cover them so that mosquitoes cannot get inside to lay eggs
- Weekly, wash out containers with a brush or sponge to remove mosquito eggs
- Use insect repellent
- All tyre punctures shops may please be instructed to put one tea spoon of salt in the tub of a water on every change, it will stop breeding of dengue mosquitos
- While sleeping use mosquito nets
- Fumigating, spraying of the areas is important

Media Reports:

http://www.express.com.pk/epaper/PoPupwindow.aspx?newsID=1102464542&Issue=NP_ISB&Date=20141010

http://epaper.dawn.com/DetailNews.php?StoryText=10_10_2014_152_006