



Travel Health Alert



26th November 2018

Malawi

A Dutch traveller has contracted African trypanosomiasis whilst on holiday in Malawi, Nov 18.

African trypanosomiasis (Sleeping Sickness) is spread by the bite of the tsetse fly. These are large black flies which are found in rural areas and are active during the daytime. They are attracted to moving objects (e.g. safari vehicles) and dark colours. They are not particularly affected by insect repellents, and can bite through lightweight clothing. A skin ulcer may occur at the site of the bite and swollen lymph nodes may appear. The disease can progress to affect the brain, causing confusion and poor coordination. The disease is fatal if left untreated.

Brazil

More than 60,000 confirmed cases (34 deaths) of chikungunya virus have been reported, Jan-Oct 18. Over 121,000 confirmed cases (99 deaths) were reported, Jan-Sep 17.

Chikungunya (CHIK) is a viral infection spread by day-time biting mosquitoes. Symptoms may include fever and muscle/joint pain. Some people experience persistent joint pain and fatigue lasting weeks or months.

Angola

Media sources have reported more than 1,300 cases of dengue fever, mainly in the capital city Luanda, Oct 18.

Bangladesh

Media sources have reported more than 9,500 cases (24 deaths) of dengue fever nationally, Jan-Nov 18. This is the highest number of cases in 18 years.





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Nepal

More than 80 cases of locally-acquired dengue fever have been reported from Kathmandu, Pokhara and Syangja in central Nepal, Oct 18. Nearly 500 cases were recorded in Sarlahi (S), Mahottari (S), Dhading (C), Jhapa (SE), Rupandehi (C) and Kathmandu (C) districts, Sep-Nov 17.

Dengue fever is a viral infection spread by day-time biting mosquitoes. It is widespread across over 110 countries with large outbreaks reported in many regions including South East Asia and South/Central America. Dengue fever commonly causes flu-like symptoms including fever, joint pain and rash. Severe forms of the disease are rare in travellers but can lead to excessive bleeding and organ failure.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

The outbreak of Ebola virus disease continues in North Kivu and Ituri provinces, (NW). 412 confirmed and probable cases (236 deaths) have been recorded, May-Nov 18. 40 healthcare workers have been infected (12 have died). Beni, Kalunguta and Katwa health zones in North Kivu Province remain the hotspots for the epidemic. Information for those travelling for humanitarian and aid work to areas affected by Ebola is available from PHE:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ebola-virus-disease-information-for-humanitarian-aid-workers>. 54 cases (33 deaths) were reported in the unrelated outbreak in Equateur Province (NW), Apr-May 18. Sporadic outbreaks are reported in DRC.

Ebola is a serious viral infection which is often fatal causing excess bleeding and organ failure. It is spread by direct contact with infected blood or bodily fluids of infected people or animals. Outbreaks have been linked to contact with infected bush meat or fruit bat saliva.

Nepal

1 confirmed and 1 suspected case of Lyme disease have been reported, Jun 17-Nov 18. These are the first cases to be reported from Nepal. An increase in cases reporting similar symptoms has been recorded, Nov 18. No testing facilities are available in the country and it is thought that cases may go undiagnosed.



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Lyme disease is a bacterial infection spread by ticks, primarily in the forests of the northern hemisphere. A 'bull's eye' rash typically develops around the bite site. Other symptoms can include joint/muscle pain, heart problems and neurological issues. Lyme disease is usually treated with antibiotics. Travellers should take steps to avoid tick bites with insect repellents and protective clothing. Any ticks found on the skin should be removed promptly and carefully with tweezers.

Madagascar

The Ministry of Health has declared an outbreak of measles, with more than 3,200 cases reported from 23 districts, Oct-Nov 18. Antananarivo-Renivohitra district is most affected. Vaccination campaigns have started.

Measles is a viral infection which causes a red blotchy rash and occasionally more serious disease. 2 doses of the MMR vaccine are recommended to provide protection against the disease. The travel consultation provides a good opportunity to ensure that all travellers are in-date with their primary vaccinations.

The Gambia/Senegal

1 confirmed case of yellow fever has been reported in an unvaccinated Dutch traveller who had visited Masa Konko in The Gambia and Niokolo Park game reserve (SE) in Senegal, Nov 18.

Nigeria

3,456 suspected cases (56 deaths) of yellow fever have been reported across all states, Sep 17-Nov 18. A campaign to vaccinate 26.2 million people is planned.

Yellow fever is a viral disease, found in tropical regions of Africa and the Americas. It principally affects humans and monkeys, and is transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito. The risk is highest in rural areas. 15-25% of those infected will develop severe disease with organ failure, jaundice and bleeding. An effective vaccine is available but may not be suitable for everyone. International regulations are in place to prevent the spread of the disease and as such the vaccine must be administered in a registered 'Yellow Fever Centre' and a certificate of vaccination issued.



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Other News

The World Malaria Report 2018 has been published. There were an estimated 219 million cases of malaria in 2017, with an estimated 435,000 deaths. 92% of the cases were in the WHO African region.

A summary of the report can be found here:

<http://www.who.int/malaria/media/world-malaria-report-2018/en/>

The full report can be read here:

<http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/275867/9789241565653-eng.pdf?ua=1>



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