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Mosquitoes And The Diseases They Spread

Even though we have made great progress in science and technology, humans still haven't beaten **infectious diseases**¹. They don't recognize races or borders. They also **adapt**², always trying to find our weaknesses. Everyone is at risk.

Did You Know?

Mosquitoes carry diseases that infect humans (killing over 1 million people per year), dogs, and livestock.



Mosquitoes are disease vectors.

World travel and global warming have caused more **vector-borne diseases**³ to spread. **Vectors**⁴ are living things that pass diseases between humans and other animals. Most vectors are biting bugs. Infection usually happens when vectors take in disease-causing **microorganisms**⁵ when sucking the blood of infected prey and then inject them into the blood of their next meal. The most well known bloodsucker is the mosquito.

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MALARIA

Malaria causes severe fever, headaches, back and muscle pain, nausea, and many other symptoms. This disease is found in most of the world's tropical areas. Almost half of the people in the world (3 billion people from 108 countries) are at risk of getting malaria. It causes more than 600,000 deaths every year, most of them children under five.

¹ **Infectious diseases:** diseases that can be spread between people.

² **Adapt:** change to handle a new situation.

³ **Vector-borne diseases:** diseases passed between humans and other animals by another type of animal or a plant (usually a bug).

⁴ **Vectors:** living things that pass diseases between humans and other animals.

⁵ **Microorganisms:** tiny living things like bacteria and viruses.

DENGUE FEVER

The dengue virus causes dengue fever. In addition to fever, the symptoms are headache, and eye, back, and body pain, sometimes with nausea, loss of appetite, and vomiting. It usually goes away without treatment, but there is a vaccine to prevent it.

YELLOW FEVER

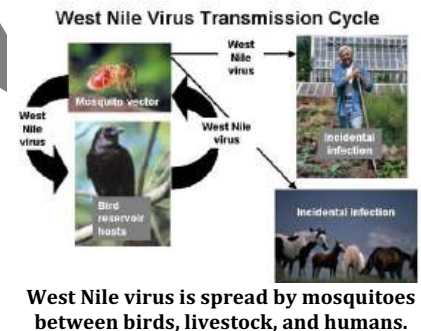
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WEST NILE FEVER

West Nile fever is caused by the West Nile virus. It is found in Africa, the Middle-East, Southern Europe, Asia, and the Americas. It was first spread among wild birds through mosquitoes and eventually spread to humans and livestock. Symptoms are fever, body pain, and rashes on the upper body.



ZIKA DISEASE



Zika has spread in many parts of the southern hemisphere.

Zika disease is caused by the Zika virus. It was first found in Africa in the 1940s but has since spread through Asia and the Americas. Aside from the mosquito bite, it can also be transmitted through sexual contact and blood transfusion. It causes mild flu-like symptoms, as well as birth defects and brain problems.

FIGHTING MOSQUITO-BORNE DISEASES

The World Health Organization (WHO) and many national governments are working together to educate people about these diseases. In addition, WHO has started many programs to spread medicine and vaccines worldwide. Some of the ways to stop the diseases from spreading are to stay away from areas where people have been infected, keep your property clean and get rid of stagnant water, and get vaccinated.

Reading Comprehension Questions

1. List three symptoms of malaria.
2. List
3. What is jaundice?
4. Where is
5. What

Extension Questions

6. Do some research on the Spanish flu (1918). How many people died and what caused the disease?
7. Using the

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