

# Mosquitoes - Factsheet

Mosquitoes are a part of our natural environment and can breed in slow moving and still water. Since we cannot eradicate them completely, we can take precautions to protect ourselves from being bitten.

## Here's How

- Screen all windows and doors to prevent mosquitoes coming inside;
- Mosquitoes are most active at dawn, around late afternoon and just after dusk. If you are outside at these times take precautions. Wear protective clothing, such as a pair of loose-fitting pants and shirt. Use insect repellent
- If you live in an unscreened house or are camping, sleep under a mosquito net
- When mosquitoes are present, spray the rooms, particularly behind furniture and other dark places. After securing screens and closing doors, leave rooms closed for half an hour before ventilating
- Air conditioning, fans and mosquito coils are also effective in protecting you from mosquitoes

## Controlling Mosquitoes Around the Home

Residents can play a vital role in reducing mosquitoes around the home. Many species of mosquitoes commonly found in back yards are potential carriers of Ross River Virus, Barmah Forest Virus, Dengue Fever and dog heartworm. By taking the following action you can control mosquitoes at your place:

- Inspect your house and yard and remove any accumulations of water;
- Empty pot plant bases weekly or fill the base with sand to absorb water;
- Bromeliads and other water holding plants should be washed out weekly;
- Clean roof gutters out regularly and trim back trees which can block gutters;
- Ensure rainwater tanks are screened;
- Stock dams with native fish and keep the edges clear of vegetation;
- Keep swimming pools maintained;
- Birdbaths, fishponds and ornamental pools should be washed out weekly and whenever possible, stock with suitable native fish

## Remember— No water No mosquitoes

### How Mosquitoes Breed

Mosquitoes only breed in water. However, they can breed in freshwater and polluted environments.

While both males and females feed on plant nectar to provide energy for flight, only the females take blood meals in order to provide protein for egg development. Not all the female mosquito species feed on humans. Some prefer animals, birds or reptiles. All mosquitoes develop in water that is very slow moving or still. They develop through four stages: egg, larva, pupa and adult. In summer, once the eggs hatch the larval stage takes 4 to 8 days and the pupae stage 1 to 2 days, to complete the

development in 7 to 14 days (depending on temperature and weather conditions). A single female can lay up to 200 eggs at a time of which 10% to 90% of eggs develop into mature mosquitoes. A flower pot base can support 150 larvae. Adult females can live up to a month – more in captivity – but most probably do not live more than 1–2 weeks in nature.

### **What Council is Doing**

Mount Isa City Council regularly visits mosquito breeding areas with environmentally safe products. Reports of mosquito infestations and breeding in public areas is always investigated by Council officers and areas are treated where necessary.

For more info on dengue fever visit <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/topics/infection-control/mosquito-borne-dengue>, or you can also contact your nearest Mount Isa and Gulf Public Health Unit at 07 47449100.

### **Alternatively, you can visit the following web pages:**

<http://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/all/prevention/mosquito-borne/index.html>

<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/diseases/mosquito-borne/dengue>

**For further information please contact:**

**Environmental Health Services at Mount Isa City Council on 4747 3200**