

Worldcue® Alert  
Severity: Informational Alert

Health: Elevated dengue fever activity reported in Laos. Take precautions against mosquito bites.

This alert affects Laos

This alert began 26 Jan 2017 17:51 GMT and is scheduled to expire 28 Feb 2017 23:59 GMT.

- **Disease:** Dengue fever
- **Affected Areas:** Laos, except Bokeo, Houaphanh, Luang Namtha, Phongsaly, Xaysomboun, and Xiangkhouang provinces ([map](#))
- **Cases:** 235
- **Period:** January 2017
- **Transmission:** Mosquito bites

### Summary

As of Jan. 25, at least 235 cases of dengue fever have been reported in Laos since the start of 2017. This compares to only 23 cases reported Jan. 1-30 in 2015 and 96 cases reported Jan. 1-29 in 2016. Dengue fever outbreaks during 2017 have occurred countrywide, except in Bokeo, Houaphanh, Luang Namtha, Phongsaly, Xaysomboun, and Xiangkhouang provinces. No additional details have been released, except that 70 of the cases were reported in the capital, Vientiane.

### Background and Analysis

Dengue fever is a year-round, nationwide risk in Laos; however, transmission rates are generally highest during the rainy season from May-September. In 2015, authorities reported more than 1,950 cases, and more than 5,610 cases in 2016. The surge in activity during 2016 was likely due to the exceptionally strong El Nino weather pattern, which caused prolonged high temperatures and high humidity. Such conditions provide the ideal environment for mosquito breeding and increased dengue fever transmission.

Dengue fever is a potentially fatal virus transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito. Infection produces a spectrum of clinical symptoms four to 10 days after exposure, ranging from influenza-like illness to severe and potentially fatal hemorrhagic fever. No vaccine is currently available to prevent dengue infection.

### Advice

As weather permits, wear long-sleeved shirts, trousers, and socks, or use insect protection containing DEET, picaridin, or another approved repellent. Remove standing water to reduce the number of biting mosquitoes. Seek medical attention if symptoms develop within three weeks of being in affected areas. Do not use aspirin or ibuprofen products if you suspect you may have dengue, as these could exacerbate bleeding tendencies associated with the disease.

Related Advice: [Dengue Fever](#)

Related Advice: [Insect Precautions](#).