

JAPANESE ENCEPHALITIS VACCINE

JE-VAX® WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Many Vaccine Information Statements are available in Spanish and other languages. See www.immunize.org/vis.

1 What is Japanese encephalitis?

Japanese encephalitis (JE) is a serious infection caused by a virus. It occurs mainly in rural parts of Asia.

JE virus spreads through the bite of infected mosquitoes. It cannot spread directly from person to person.

The risk of JE is very low for most travelers, but it is higher for people living or traveling for long periods in areas where the disease is common.

Most people infected with JE virus don't have any symptoms at all. For others, JE virus infection can cause illness ranging from fever and headache to severe encephalitis (brain infection).

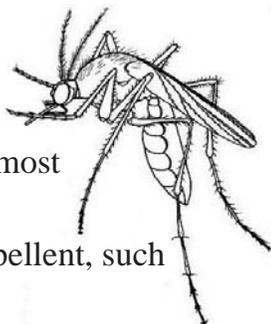
Symptoms of encephalitis are fever, neck stiffness, seizures, changes in consciousness, or coma.

About 1 person in 4 with encephalitis dies. Of those who don't die, up to half may suffer permanent brain damage. There is some evidence that an infection in a pregnant woman can harm her unborn baby.

2 How can I prevent JE?

The best way to prevent JE is to avoid mosquito bites by:

- remaining in well-screened areas,
- wearing clothes that cover most of your body,
- using an effective insect repellent, such as those containing DEET.



Some travelers to Asia should also receive JE vaccine.

3 Who should get JE vaccine?

Japanese encephalitis vaccine is recommended for travelers to Asia who:

- plan to spend at least a month in areas where JE occurs,
- are traveling to these areas for less than a month but plan to visit rural areas or engage in outdoor activities,
- go to areas where there is a JE outbreak, or
- are not sure of their itinerary.

Laboratory workers at risk of exposure to JE virus should also get JE vaccine.

4 JE vaccine (JE-VAX®)

There are two types of JE vaccine. Both of these vaccines are effective in preventing JE.

The vaccine you are getting is called JE-VAX. *This is the only JE vaccine approved for children and adolescents younger than 17.* The information on this sheet refers to this vaccine only. There is a separate information sheet for the other JE vaccine.

JE-VAX is given as a 3-dose series:

- Dose 1: When needed
- Dose 2: 7 days after dose 1
- Dose 3: 30 days after dose 1

The last dose should be given at least *10 days* before travel.

If you can't complete this series before you travel, ask your provider about alternatives.

A booster dose may be needed after 2 years.

JE vaccine may be given at the same time as other vaccines.

5 Some people should not get JE vaccine

- Anyone who has ever had a life-threatening reaction to a previous dose of this JE vaccine should not get another dose.
- People who have a history of severe allergic reactions may be at increased risk for an allergic reaction to JE vaccine. Tell your doctor if you have ever had a severe allergic reaction.
- Pregnant women should generally not get JE vaccine. But if you are pregnant, check with your doctor. It could be recommended under certain circumstances.

If you will be traveling for fewer than 30 days, especially if you will be staying in major urban areas, tell your doctor. You may be at lower risk and not need the vaccine.

6 What are the risks from JE-VAX?

Like any medicine, a vaccine could cause a serious reaction. But the risk of JE vaccine causing serious harm, or death, is extremely small.

Mild Problems

- Redness or swelling where the shot was given (about 1 person in 5)
- Fever, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, chills, muscle aches (about 1 person in 10)

Moderate or Severe Problems

- Serious allergic reactions (between 1 in 400 and 1 in 100,000). Such a reaction could occur up to 10 days after the vaccination. Stay where you will have access to medical care during this time, if possible.
- Seizures or other serious nervous system problems (between 1 in 50,000 and 1 in a million).

7 What if there is a severe reaction?

What should I look for?

Any unusual condition, such as a high fever or behavior changes. Signs of a severe allergic reaction can include difficulty breathing, swelling of the face or neck, hoarseness or wheezing, hives, paleness, weakness, a fast heart beat or dizziness.

What should I do?

- Call a doctor, or get the person to a doctor right away.
- Tell the doctor what happened, the date and time it happened, and when the vaccination was given.
- Ask your provider to report the reaction by filing a Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) form. Or you can file this report through the VAERS website at www.vaers.hhs.gov, or by calling 1-800-822-7967.

VAERS does not provide medical advice.

8 How can I learn more?

- Ask your provider. They can give you the vaccine package insert or suggest other sources of information.
- Call your local or state health department.
- Contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
 - Call **1-800-232-4636 (1-800-CDC-INFO)**
 - Visit the CDC's travelers' health website at **www.cdc.gov/travel**
 - Visit CDC's JE website at www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/jencephalitis/index.htm



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