

Communicable Diseases Weekly Report

Week 8, 19 February to 25 February 2023

In this report we provide information regarding Murray Valley encephalitis and a summary of notifiable conditions activity in NSW over the reporting period Week 5, 19 to 25 February 2023.

For surveillance data on COVID-19 and influenza please see the latest [NSW Respiratory Surveillance Report](#).

For up-to-date information regarding the Japanese encephalitis outbreak and the NSW response, please visit the [NSW Health Japanese encephalitis page](#).

Information on notifiable conditions is available at the NSW Health [infectious diseases page](#). This includes links to other NSW Health [infectious disease surveillance reports](#) and a [diseases data page](#) for a range of notifiable infectious diseases.

Confirmed case of Murray Valley encephalitis

The first confirmed infection case of Murray Valley encephalitis (MVE) in NSW since 2011 has been reported this week. The man in his 60s was potentially exposed to infected mosquitoes in Temora Shire, Edward River Shire or Murrumbidgee Council areas within Murrumbidgee Local Health District (LHD) and is receiving treatment in hospital.

In the weeks preceding his illness, NSW Health issued a [public health alert](#) to residents of inland NSW to widespread detections of MVE across the area, including across the areas the case was exposed. These detections were identified by the [NSW Arbovirus Surveillance and Mosquito Monitoring Program](#), which combines surveillance of chicken flocks, mosquito traps and testing of people to provide an early warning system for all mosquito-borne viruses, including MVE.

MVE is a rare but serious mosquito-borne illness that is transmitted by the bite of *Culex* mosquitoes. It is more common in some parts of northern Australia and Papua New Guinea.

Most people infected with MVE virus do not show symptoms, or may develop a mild illness with fever, headache, nausea, and vomiting. A small proportion may develop severe disease involving encephalitis, inflammation of the brain. Symptoms of encephalitis include severe headache, increasing confusion, drowsiness, and loss of coordination. It can progress to seizures, loss of consciousness and sometimes death. People with encephalitis usually require treatment in hospital. Approximately half of all people who recover from encephalitis will develop permanent neurological complications.

There is currently no specific treatment for Murray Valley encephalitis, or vaccine to prevent infection.

People in NSW are urged to take actions to prevent mosquito bites to protect against all mosquito-borne viruses including Japanese encephalitis, Ross River virus and Barmah Forest virus.

[Keep Mozzies Away](#) to protect yourself and your family by:

- applying repellent to all areas of exposed skin, using repellents that contain DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus
- re-applying repellent regularly, particularly after swimming, being sure to always apply sunscreen first and then apply repellent

- wearing light, loose-fitting long-sleeved shirts, long pants and covered footwear and socks, especially around dusk and dawn
- covering openings such as windows and doors with insect screens and checking there are no gaps in them
- removing items that might collect water (such as old tyres, empty pots) outside your house where mosquitoes can breed
- improving drainage on your property so that water does not become stagnant
- using insecticide sprays, vapour dispensing units and mosquito coils to repel mosquitos (mosquito coils should only be used outside).

Further information

- [Murray Valley Encephalitis \(MVE\) factsheet](#)
- [Mosquitoes are a health hazard factsheet](#)
- [Mosquito borne diseases](#)

Summary of notifiable conditions activity in NSW

The following table summarises notifiable conditions activity over the reporting period alongside reports received in the previous week, year to date and in previous years (Table 1).

Table 1. NSW Notifiable conditions from 19 to 25 February 2023, by date received*

		Weekly		Year to date					Full Year			
		This week	Last week	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2022	2021	2020	2019
Enteric Diseases	Campylobacter	238	254	2188	1925	2270	2103	2018	12900	12790	10819	11930
	Cryptosporidiosis	12	14	115	64	147	208	181	463	444	548	669
	Giardiasis	49	55	340	183	299	517	709	1389	1548	1953	3386
	Hepatitis A	2	2	15	3	0	12	17	37	8	19	61
	Paratyphoid	1	2	11	0	0	8	15	12	1	17	39
	Rotavirus	60	45	645	51	50	247	111	1811	356	500	1777
	Salmonellosis	80	72	671	636	790	898	849	2967	3100	2885	3552
	Shigellosis	27	22	155	32	13	251	150	460	60	494	867
	STEC/VTEC	5	0	27	19	24	20	18	144	126	115	79
	Typhoid	4	5	17	5	0	21	22	47	2	37	64
Other Diseases	Invasive Group A Streptococcus	13	7	107	0	-	-	-	144	-	-	-
Respiratory Diseases	Influenza	371	300	2779	36	12	4820	4049	116315	124	7481	116402
	Legionellosis	5	4	38	47	42	19	37	268	214	171	154
	Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)	467	346	2010	1	-	-	-	5669	-	-	-
Sexually Transmissible Infections	Tuberculosis	10	12	92	55	93	72	76	528	559	625	589
	Chlamydia	563	644	4971	3415	4805	5538	5085	25854	25309	27233	32474
Vaccine Preventable Diseases	Gonorrhoea	252	251	1914	1315	1500	2022	1769	10229	7625	9880	11686
	Meningococcal Disease	2	0	8	3	2	4	8	36	23	22	59
	Mumps	2	0	3	0	3	22	12	24	6	56	59
	Pertussis	3	3	18	3	6	675	1076	81	43	1400	6387
Vector Borne Diseases	Pneumococcal Disease (Invasive)	9	3	62	29	48	71	52	545	386	342	686
	Barmah Forest	5	3	29	13	23	14	12	89	111	271	63
	Dengue	6	5	42	2	1	42	74	164	4	76	456
	Malaria	9	5	28	2	1	6	11	42	8	25	73
	Ross River	7	12	97	257	165	34	83	725	660	1990	596

*** Notes on Table 1: NSW Notifiable Conditions activity**

- Only conditions which had one or more case reports received during the reporting week appear in the table.
- Surveillance data on COVID-19 can be found in the [NSW Respiratory Surveillance Report](#).
- Data cells represent the number of case reports received by NSW public health units and recorded on the NSW Notifiable Conditions Information Management System (NCIMS) in the relevant period (i.e. by report date).
- Note that [notifiable disease data](#) available on the NSW Health website are reported by onset date so case totals are likely to vary from those shown here.
- Cases involving interstate residents are not included.

- Chronic blood-borne virus conditions (such as HIV, hepatitis B and C) are not included here. Related data are available from the [Infectious Diseases Data](#), the [HIV Surveillance Data Reports](#) and the [Hepatitis B and C Strategies Data Reports](#) webpages.
- Notification is dependent on a diagnosis being made by a doctor, hospital or laboratory. Changes in awareness and testing patterns influence the proportion of patients with a particular infection that is diagnosed and notified over time, especially if the infection causes non-specific symptoms.