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Agência Nacional de Vigilância Sanitária

National Agency for Health Vigilance

Considerations on DENGUE, its symptoms and main concerns for vessels calling the Ports of Paranaguá and Antonina

DENGUE is a viral disease transmitted by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, spreading quickly throughout the world. In the last 50 years, its occurrence increased 30 fold times, with the increase of its geographical expansion into new countries and, in the current decade, into small cities and rural areas. It is believed that 50 million Dengue infections occur annually and that approximately 2,500 million people live in countries where Dengue is endemic.

Dengue is a disease whose transmission peak period is Summer, due to climatic factors favourable to the proliferation of its vector, the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito.

We requested that the information condensed hereinunder be divulged to Agencies and Marine Agents to, in turn, divulge it to vessels, their Masters and crew, regarding basic care, basic measures to be taken by everybody:

THE DISEASE - DESCRIPTION:

Acute fever disease, which can present a wide clinical spectrum: while most of the patients recover after a light clinical self-limited evolution, a small part thereof progresses towards a serious disease. It is the viral disease transmitted by mosquitoes that spreads the quickest in the world, being the most important *arbovirose* affecting humans, becoming a serious Public Health problem. It occurs and spreads the most in tropical and subtropical countries, where the environment conditions favour the development and the proliferation of both the *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus*.

HOW IS IT TRANSMITTED?

The disease is transmitted through the bite of the female mosquito *Aedes aegypti*. There is no transmission through direct contact with patients or their secretions, nor through water or food.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Watch out for the Dengue symptoms:

After the bite of a virus infected mosquito, symptoms usually appear from the 3rd to the 15th day thereafter. That period is called the incubation period. The average time of duration of the disease is from five to six days.

One needs to be on the alert to the appearance of symptoms. In case they do, one should see a doctor immediately, avoiding self-medicating.

After the incubation period the following symptoms show up:

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The Dengue patient may present symptoms such as sudden high fever (39°C to 40°C – 102°F to 104°F), usually lasting from 2 to 7 days, together with headaches, body and articulations pains, exhaustion, weakness, pain behind the eyes, cutaneous eruption and itching. Weight loss, nausea and vomiting are common. Bleeding (nose, gums), intense and continuous abdominal pain, persistent vomiting, lethargy, sleepiness or irritability, hypotension and dizziness can be an alarm and/or a worsening sign.

Serious cases need special medical attention, as they can be fatal. It is important to seek medical orientation as the first symptoms appear.

Common Dengue

- ✓ Sudden High fever.
- ✓ Strong headaches.
- ✓ Pain behind the eyes, getting worse when they move.
- ✓ Loss of palate and appetite.
- ✓ Skin spots and eruptions similar to measles', mainly in the thorax and arms.
- ✓ Nausea and vomiting.
- ✓ Dizziness.
- ✓ Extreme tiredness.
- ✓ Lack of energy and body pains.
- ✓ Intense bones and articulations pains.

Haemorrhagic Dengue

The symptoms of the Haemorrhagic Dengue are the same of the common one but when the fever is over the alert signs begin:

- ✓ Strong and continuous abdominal pains.
- ✓ Persistent vomiting.
- ✓ Pale, cold and humid skin.
- ✓ Bleeding from the nose, mouth and gums.
- ✓ Red spots in the skin.
- ✓ Sleepiness, agitation and mental confusion.
- ✓ Excessive thirst and dry mouth.
- ✓ Fast and weak pulse.
- ✓ Breathing difficulty.
- ✓ Loss of consciousness.

With Haemorrhagic Dengue the clinical situation worsens rapidly, presenting signs of circulatory insufficiency and shock, and it can take the patient to obit within 24 hours. The Ministry of Health statistics show that the death rate among people suffering from Haemorrhagic Dengue is approximately 5%.

HOW TO PREVENT IT?

The best way to avoid Dengue is to eliminate situations where water accumulates, ideal breeding spots for the vector mosquito, reason why it is important not to allow the accumulation of water in cans, packaging materials, plastic glasses, soft drinks caps, old tires, vases with plants, flowers pots, bottles, water containers, drums, cisterns, plastic bags, garbage cans, and so many others.

Ensure the elimination of the mosquitos by using spray insecticides, leaving it for 20 minutes and then aerating the place.

For your protection, use repellent on the skin, mainly in trips or in places with plenty mosquitos, it is a palliative method to protect against Dengue. The use of industrialized products is recommended.

TREATMENT (OBJECTIVES)

There is no treatment for Dengue. The objectives are:

- ✓ To ensure hydration, to relieve symptoms such as pain, fever and vomiting. Calm the patient down, watch out for and prevent eventual complications and treat them as they come up.
- ✓ Hydration – Persuade the patient to keep himself hydrated by drinking fluids, or, if needed, intravenously.
- ✓ Antipyretics and painkillers, except for Aspirin (or any ASA based medication) and anti-inflammatory non-steroid medication, thus preserving the platelets function.
- ✓ To watch for circulatory insufficiency through blood pressure, haematocrit (PCV), platelet count and consciousness level.
- ✓ Rest, food and relaxing.

WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF A SUSPECTED CASE ABOARD A VESSEL

In the case of suspicion of a Dengue infection, inform the Health Authority of the next port of call and seek a doctor's help. This professional will guide you to take the necessary measures.