



**MINISTRY OF HEALTH,
WELLNESS AND THE
ENVIRONMENT**

Ministerial Building, Kingstown,
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Permanent Secretary

Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

DENGUE OUTBREAK UPDATE

Some six hundred and sixty-five (665) laboratory confirmed cases of dengue fever have been reported in St. Vincent and the Grenadines for 2020 as of Tuesday October 6, 2020. Persons who live in the Kingstown, Calliaqua and Pembroke Health Districts account for 64.58% of these cases. The majority of affected persons, 69.47%, is in the twenty-five (25) and under age group, with 52.98% being in the 0-15-year age group.

The Surveillance Committee of the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment has now determined that five (5) persons have so far died from complications of Severe Dengue Fever during the current outbreak. One person previously classified as dying from Severe Dengue Fever, has been determined to have had dengue fever but died from other causes. No new deaths have been recorded since the last reported case on October 1.

All health care facilities continue to report an increased demand for care by clients presenting with symptoms and signs consistent with dengue fever. The Outbreak Response Plan for Arboviral Diseases, part of the National Health Multi-Hazard Response Plan, has been activated and surge capacity measures have been implemented. These measures include increasing health staff, reducing elective admissions and increasing admission capacity. The Central Medical Stores of the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment, utilizing the Emergency Supply Chain system, has ensured that the increased demand for all treatments and supplies required for the management of all clients seeking care, has been consistently met.

Symptoms of Dengue Fever include fever, headache with pain behind the eyes, a rash, abdominal pain, vomiting and bleeding. Home treatments for dengue should focus on reducing the fever by using cool not cold baths, acetaminophen (paracetamol) not ibuprofen (or other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) and papaya leaf extract. Maintaining hydration by drinking lots of fluids such as coconut water is very important. Persons with symptoms of Dengue Fever are urged to seek medical care very early and to follow the recommendations of their health care providers to avoid the possible complications of dengue fever.

The Environmental Health Services Programme, including the Vector Control Unit, continues to implement the Integrated Vector Control Strategy aimed at reducing the mosquito vector of the dengue virus, with a focus on source reduction. De-bushing, cleaning of drains, clearing of river mouths, ensuring the proper storage of water and other interventions aimed at eliminating potential and actual mosquito breeding sites are being implemented by a multi-stakeholder team that includes agricultural workers and BRAGSA.

The Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment is reminding all that the health of the Vincentian public is a shared responsibility. The fight against the current dengue fever outbreak requires that everyone works together. The Ministry will continue to partner with community-based organizations and NGOs to, “Search and Destroy – a Clean Up Campaign to Stop Dengue Fever.”

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