

TRANSCRIPT

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Transcript: AMA Queensland President, Dr Nick Yim, 7NEWS, Afternoons with Katrina Blowers, Tuesday 15 April 2025

Subject: Japanese encephalitis virus

KATRINA BLOWERS: Queenslanders are being reminded to take precautions against mosquitoes, with the increasing risk of mosquito borne illnesses like Japanese encephalitis. The Australian Medical Association Queensland President Dr Nick Yim joins us now. Dr Nick, what is Japanese encephalitis and why these warnings against it now?

DR NICK YIM: So Japanese encephalitis, as you rightfully introduced it, is a mosquito borne virus. What we've seen across Queensland, unfortunately from the north, even in the south-east, in western Queensland – a lot of floods. With floods come stagnant water and that is a great opportunity for mosquitoes to breed. Japanese encephalitis is a very rare illness, but in some people who do contract it, it can be quite serious. Maybe causing seizures, hospitalisations and unfortunately sometimes death, which is the reason why it's so important for us to send out some warnings to Queenslanders to ensure that they are protected.

KATRINA BLOWERS: Looking at the video of all those mosquitoes is making my skin crawl. Tell us though, how many cases are there of this virus in Queensland and are there any regions or hotspots to be particularly concerned about?

DR NICK YIM: In Queensland there have been three cases detected this year. Unfortunately, two people have passed away from this virus. As we've mentioned with regards to the hotspots, for people who have been affected by floods – so northern Queensland, western Queensland, southern downs and some areas of Brisbane – there have been warnings from the public health unit of Queensland Health. It's really important for Queenslanders to stay up-to-date, look on that website and if you are in those affected regions or planning to visit those regions, consider getting immunised, because that is one of the methods to get protection from Japanese encephalitis.

KATRINA BLOWERS: That is great advice. Dr Nick, thank you so much for joining us on Seven's afternoon news today.

DR NICK YIM: Always a pleasure. Thank you.

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