

# JAPANESE ENCEPHALITIS

## CASE STUDY

### Background

Three human cases of Japanese Encephalitis (JE) were identified in Victorian residents in early 2025 after a period of no reported cases. JE is a rare but potentially serious brain infection caused by a virus that can be spread to humans through mosquito bites. Most people who contract JE do not have symptoms, however for those who do there may be lifelong neurological complications or even death.

**The best defence against the virus is to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes and if eligible being vaccinated.**

In response to the increased risk in the Loddon Mallee, with eight of the nine local government areas eligible for vaccine, (based on eligibility criteria) LMPHU delivered a project in 2025 to reduce the incidence of JE illness.

### Key deliverables

- Community and visitor awareness of the risk so they can take responsibility for their own health
- GP awareness so that symptomatic cases can be treated appropriately and in a timely manner, and they are reported to assist with an overall risk picture
- Distribution of repellent through Loddon Mallee Council's for dusk outdoor dining and events provides reminders for people to protect themselves and use repellent
- Increased awareness of JE vaccinations and the booster requirements to decrease the risk of people becoming seriously ill



July 2025

## What we did

- Identified barriers to vaccination uptake and targeted information and communications to address.
- Provided updates to immunisation recommendations and eligibility to GPs and Community Health settings and the community through the LMPHU update and our website.
- Worked with Loddon Mallee local governments to identify locations and settings where there was higher risk of mosquito bites and limited access to repellent and supplied repellent and signage.
- Developed education resources for primary school settings ahead of the 2026/2027 season, which will be distributed with repellent for in school use.

## Outcome

Working with stakeholders on this funded project highlighted that pooling of resources, expertise, and local knowledge result in better outcomes for organisations and the community.

## Supporting documents

- [Serosurvey for Japanese Encephalitis virus in northern Victoria | health.vic.gov.au](https://health.vic.gov.au)
- [Japanese encephalitis virus](#)
- [Mosquito surveillance and control program](#)
- [LMPHU - Japanese encephalitis \(JE\)](#)
- [LMPHU - Mosquitos Flyer](#)
- [Protect yourself from mosquito-borne disease - Better Health Channel](#)

### Avoid mozzie bites this long weekend



A second human case of Japanese encephalitis (JE) virus has been found in northern Victoria recently.

If you're heading to the Murray River or spending time outdoors this long weekend, avoid mosquito bites by:



1. Use mozzie repellent on exposed skin
2. Wear long, loose fitting clothing
3. Check mosquito nettings or screens

