(Also called arthropod-borne encephalitis. Includes eastern equine encephalitis, St. Louis encephalitis, California encephalitis)

What are arboviral infections?
Arboviral (short for arthropod-borne) infections are caused by a number of different viruses that are spread by arthropods such as mosquitoes. These infections generally occur during warm weather months when mosquitoes are active.

Who gets arboviral infections?
Anyone can get an arboviral infection but young children and the elderly appear to be most susceptible.

How are arboviral infections spread?
Most arboviral infections are spread by infected mosquitoes. Fortunately, only a few types of mosquitoes are capable of spreading the disease and only a small number of the mosquitoes actually carry the viruses. Occasionally, migrating birds have the ability to carry viruses from one area of the country to another. However, people cannot get the viruses from birds, animals or other people.

What are the symptoms of arboviral infections?
Symptoms of the various types of viral infections spread by mosquitoes are usually similar but differ in severity. Most infections do not result in any symptoms. Mild cases may occur with only a slight fever and/or headache. Severe infections are marked by a rapid onset, headache, high fever, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, paralysis or death.

How soon after exposure do symptoms occur?
Symptoms usually occur 5 to 15 days after exposure to infective mosquitoes.

Does past infection with an arbovirus make a person immune?
Yes, infection with an arbovirus can provide immunity to that specific virus and perhaps to other related viruses.

What is the treatment for arboviral infections?
The physician will usually attempt to relieve the symptoms of the illness, but there is no specific treatment available for arboviral infections.

How can arboviral infections be prevented?
Insect repellents can be used when outdoors in mosquito-infested areas. Homes should be screened to prevent entry of mosquitoes. Homeowners should remove old tires and other containers that hold water and provide a breeding site for mosquitoes. Communities or municipalities may establish a mosquito surveillance or control program to reduce mosquito populations by applying pesticides and draining stagnant water.