

# Invasion of the Americas by mosquito-borne virus likely

August 18 2014

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While media attention has been focused recently on coronavirus cases in the Arabian peninsula and the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, experts note that another threat lies in the spread of Chikungunya fever, an illness that is transmitted by mosquitoes and can cause fever, joint and muscle pain, headaches, and rashes. While it does not often cause death, the symptoms can be severe and disabling, with no treatment available.

The potential for worldwide spread of Chikungunya virus is much higher than the risk of dissemination of Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus or Ebola virus, and the number of cases expected from the introduction of Chikungunya virus into the Americas, Europe, or both is immeasurably higher.

Attention and funding should be directed to building up surveillance systems, organizing international coordination efforts, and rapidly developing countermeasures, according to a *Clinical Microbiology and Infection* article.

"Concerning worldwide globalization of Chikungunya, the question is not whether it can happen, but when it will happen," said lead author Dr. Remi Charrel.

**More information:** Charrel, R. N., Leparc-Goffart, I., Gallian, P. and de Lamballerie, X. (2014), Globalization of Chikungunya: 10 years to invade the world. *Clinical Microbiology and Infection*, 20: 662-663. [DOI: 10.1111/1469-0691.12694](https://doi.org/10.1111/1469-0691.12694)

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