# Travel Experts Warn of Increasing Health Risks from Mosquito-Borne Diseases in Europe



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Travel experts are urging holidaymakers to remain vigilant about potential health risks from mosquito-borne diseases, which are increasingly prevalent in popular European destinations such as Spain, Greece, and Italy. With the spread of diseases traditionally limited to tropical areas, travelers are advised to take precautions against mosquito bites, particularly by using repellents that contain DEET and wearing protective clothing.

Claudia Tavani, a travel expert, highlighted the dangers of diseases such as malaria, dengue, and yellow fever. Tavani also noted the risk associated with the warble fly larva, which might be transmitted through mosquito bites, causing symptoms that appear up to 10 weeks after returning from a trip. Signs of infection include bruises, itchy wheals, and inflamed lymph nodes. In severe cases, larva extraction may require surgical intervention.

Former flight attendant and tourism degree holder Res Marty emphasized the importance of vaccinations and preventive measures for diseases like yellow fever, typhoid fever, malaria, and hepatitis A, which are spread by contaminated food, water, and direct contact with infectious persons. Marty also warned about the risk of rabies transmission from stray animals in certain regions.

Travel agent Hans Mast pointed out the need for thorough research on the health risks specific to travel destinations and recommended carrying a comprehensive first-aid kit, including prescription medications and insect repellents.

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) has raised alarms about worsening outbreaks of mosquito-borne diseases in Europe, including dengue and chikungunya. Recent cases of West Nile Virus have been reported in Seville, Spain, and Modena, Italy. The virus, which can cause fever, body aches, rashes, and severe neurological symptoms like paralysis, poses significant risks, especially to individuals over 50 or those with pre-existing health conditions.

The ECDC reported 713 locally acquired cases of West Nile Virus in Europe last year, with 67 fatalities. Climate change and increased international travel are contributing factors to the spread of these diseases into new regions.

Authorities advise travelers to stay informed about potential health risks, recommended vaccinations, and preventive measures to ensure a safe holiday.