Dengue Fever and Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever

Dengue fever is an acute viral infection transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito, Aedes aegypti, which bites during the day time.

These mosquitoes breed in stored and exposed water collection vessels such as drums, jars, pots, buckets, flower vases, water tanks, discarded bottles, tyres, water coolers and the like.

Dengue fever manifests itself 4-7 days after the bite of an infected mosquito.

Symptoms:
- high fever
- pain behind the eyes
- headache
- body aches and joint pains.
- sometimes, skin rash

Dengue haemorrhagic fever, a potentially lethal complication of dengue fever, results in:
- high fever, restlessness
- severe and continuous pain in the abdomen
- bleeding from the nose, mouth and gums or skin
- bruising
- black stools
- pale or cold skin.

No vaccine or specific antiviral drugs are available.

How to protect yourself:
Prevent breeding of mosquitoes in your vicinity:
- Drain water from coolers, tanks, barrels etc. at weekly intervals
- Practice “dry days” – dry your coolers once a week for 2-3 hours
- Remove solid waste and objects where water collects.
- Protect yourself from mosquito bites:
  - Wear full-sleeve clothes and long dresses to cover the limbs
  - Use mosquito coils and electric vapour mats during the daytime
  - Use mosquito nets, repellents for patients sick with dengue to prevent mosquitoes acquiring the virus by feeding on them.
  - If dengue fever is suspected, avoid administration of aspirin and ibuprofen as these may increase bleeding and abdominal pain. Take paracetamol or acetaminophen for fever and body aches.
  - Seek medical advice immediately if bleeding manifests.

Antibiotics have no role in treatment of dengue fever.

Say NO to the use of antibiotics in dengue fever.