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This viral disease is transmitted to humans by infected mosquitoes. Chikungunya causes fever and severe joint pain. Other symptoms include muscle pain, headache, nausea, fatigue and rash. The disease shares some clinical signs with dengue, and can be misdiagnosed in areas where dengue is common. There is no cure for the disease. Treatment is focused on relieving the symptoms. The proximity of mosquito breeding sites to human habitation is a significant risk factor for chikungunya. The disease occurs in Africa, Asia and the Indian subcontinent. In recent decades mosquito vectors of chikungunya have spread to Europe and the Americas. In 2007, disease transmission was reported for the first time in a localized outbreak in north-eastern Italy.

## CHIKUNGUNYA RESEARCH IN THE AMERICAS

SSI is now involved in 2 projects supporting Chikungunya research in the Americas:

1. In fall of 2014 SSI received a supplemental grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) of nearly \$150,000 to screen for Chikungunya virus in Nicaragua.<sup>[1]</sup>
2. In late 2014, SSI initiated a collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization to study Chikungunya, with the following specific objectives:
  - a. Support in-country molecular and serological diagnosis of Chikungunya in collaboration with the Ministry of Health of Nicaragua
  - b. Sequence and characterize viral strains circulating in Nicaragua
  - c. Study the epidemiology and natural history of the Chikungunya introduction in Nicaragua

**~ \$150,000**

In NIH Funding to screen for Chikungunya virus in Nicaragua



Support in-country molecular and serological diagnosis

1. Read more about this exciting new research collaboration at: <http://prurgent.com/2014-10-10/pressrelease362668.htm>