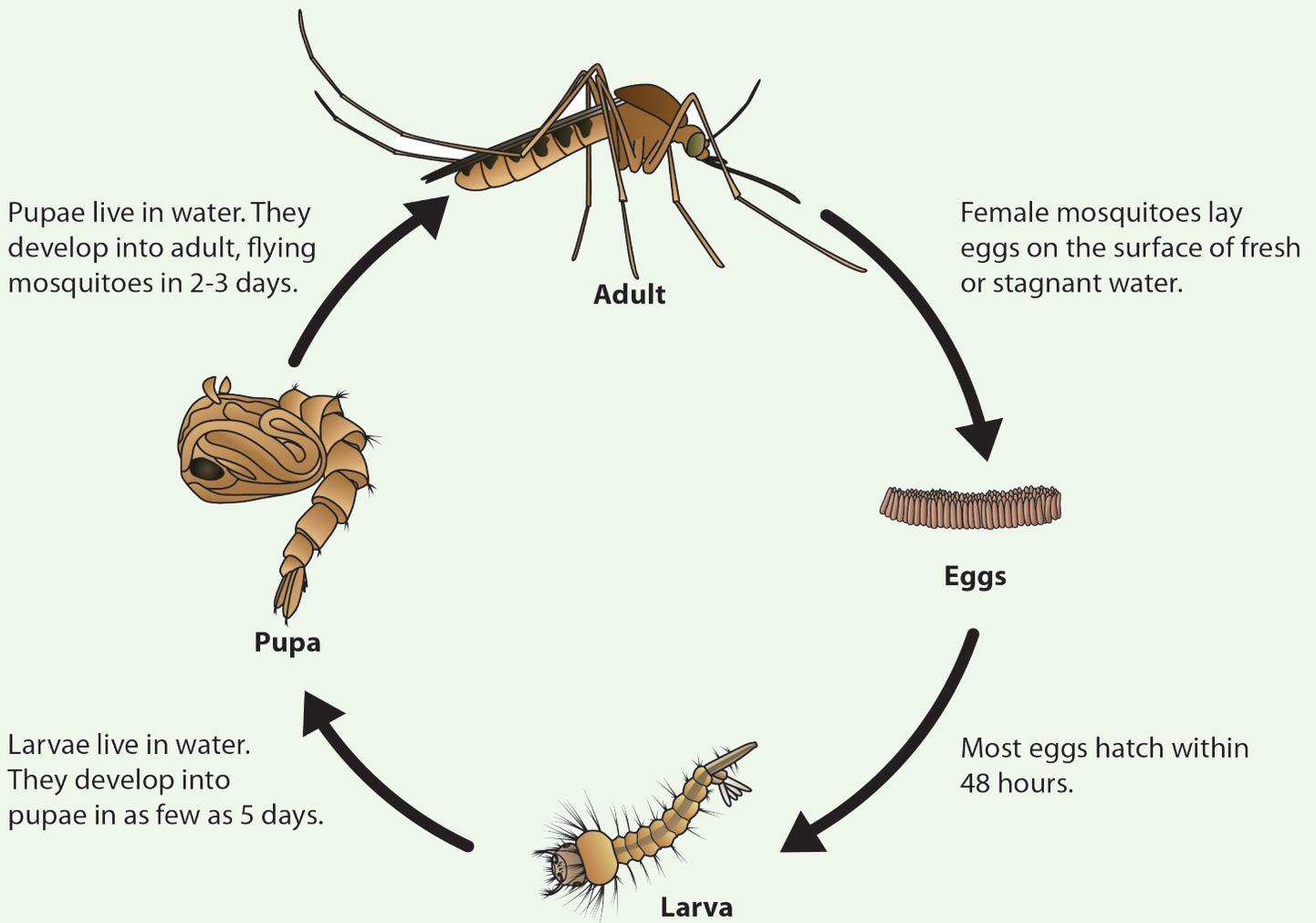


# Mosquito Life Cycle



*Culex pipiens*, *Cx. quinquefasciatus*, and *Cx. tarsalis*

It takes about 7–10 days for an egg to develop into an adult mosquito.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

# Life stages of *Culex* species mosquitoes

## Eggs

- Adult, female mosquitoes lay eggs on the surface of fresh or stagnant water. Water sources can include barrels, horse troughs, ornamental ponds, unmaintained swimming pools, puddles, creeks, ditches, and marshy areas.
- A female *Culex* mosquito lays eggs one at a time. Eggs stick together to form a raft of 100 to 300 eggs. The raft floats on the water.

## Larva

- Larvae hatch from mosquito eggs and live in water.
- Larvae can be seen in the water. They are very active and are often called “wrigglers.”
- They feed on materials found in the water.
- Larvae shed their skin (molt) several times during this stage.

## Pupa

- Pupae live in water. Pupae do not have external mouthparts and do not feed during this stage.
- An adult mosquito emerges from a pupa and flies away.

## Adult

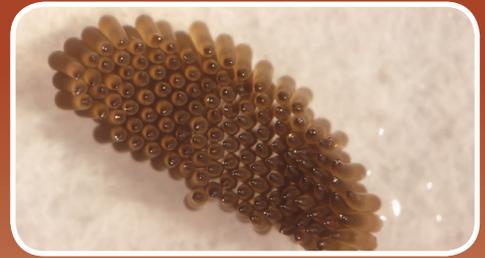
- Adult female mosquitoes bite people and animals. Mosquitoes need blood to produce eggs.
- After blood feeding, female mosquitoes look for water sources to lay eggs. Several days pass between feeding and looking for a place to lay eggs.
- *Culex* mosquitoes don't fly long distances, but have been known to fly up to 2 miles (3.2 km).
- Some *Culex* mosquitoes prefer to live near and bite birds. They bite people when other animals are not nearby.
- Because *Culex* bite animals and people, they live outdoors or near homes.

## For more information on diseases spread by mosquitoes:

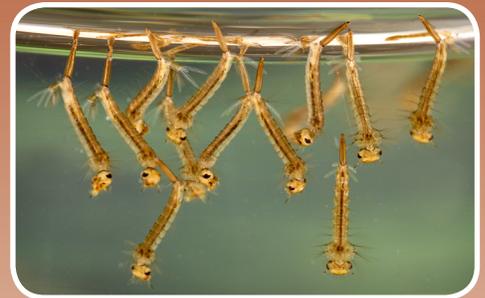
- [www.cdc.gov/westnile](http://www.cdc.gov/westnile)
- [www.cdc.gov/easternequineencephalitis](http://www.cdc.gov/easternequineencephalitis)
- [www.cdc.gov/sle](http://www.cdc.gov/sle)

## For more information on mosquitoes:

- [www.cdc.gov/mosquitoes](http://www.cdc.gov/mosquitoes)



Eggs stick together to form a raft.



Larvae in the water.



Pupae in the water.



Female mosquito **before** a blood meal.



Female mosquito **after** a blood meal.