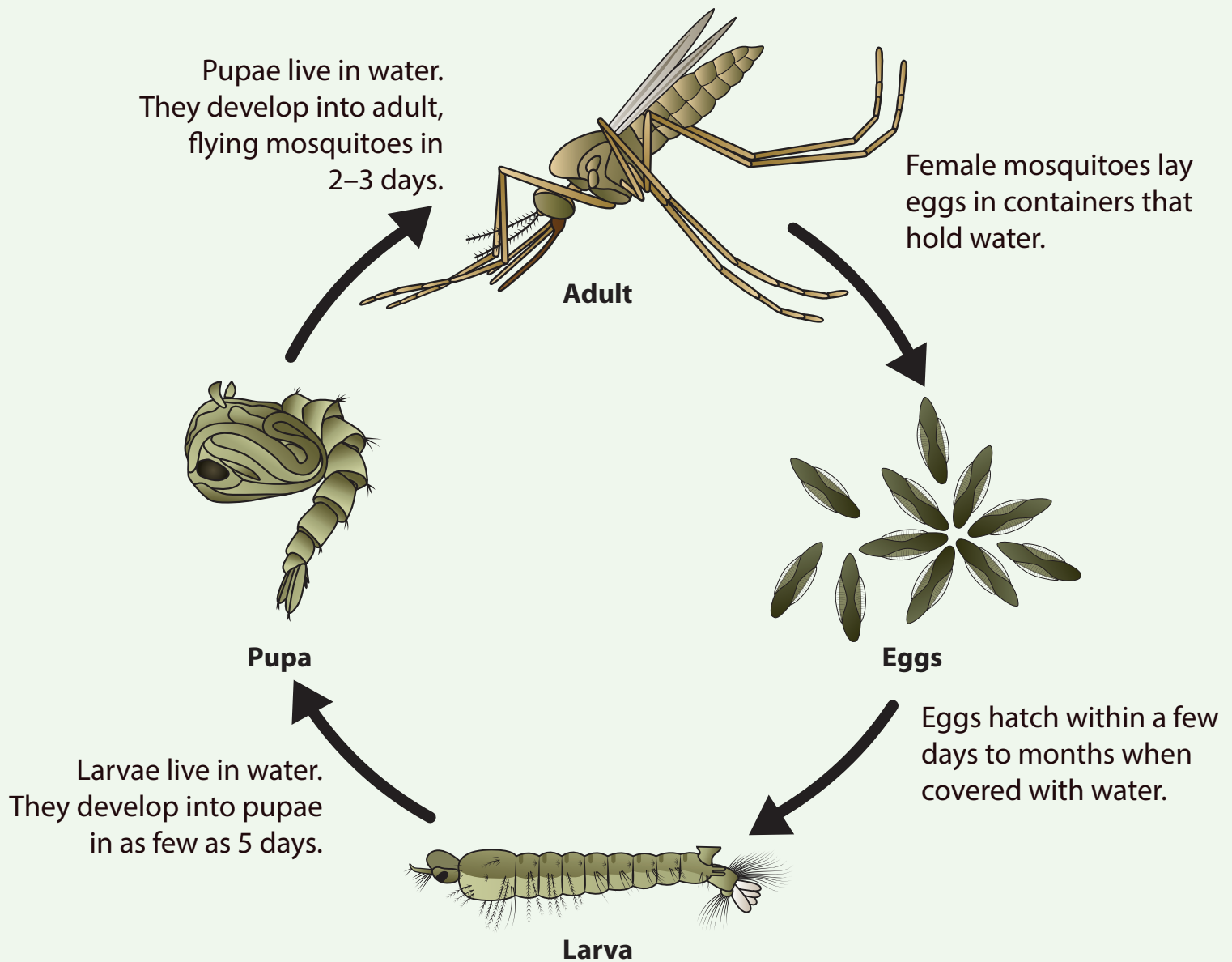


# Mosquito Life Cycle



## *Anopheles* species mosquitoes

It usually takes 10–14 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 *Anopheles* species mosquitoes

## Eggs

- Adult, female mosquitoes lay eggs one at a time directly on water. The eggs float on the surface of the water.
- Adult, female mosquitoes lay 50–200 eggs at a time.
- Eggs do not tolerate drying out.

## Larva

- Larvae live in the water. They hatch from mosquito eggs.
- *Anopheles* larvae breathe by using special organs (called spiracles) located on their abdomen.
- Larvae shed their skin (molt) four times during this stage before becoming pupae.

## Pupa

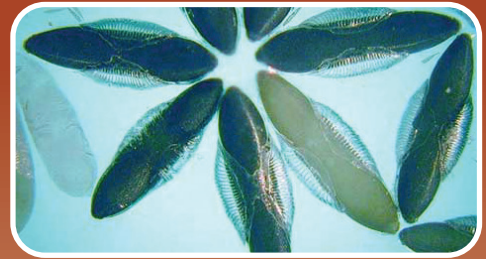
- Pupae live in water. Pupae do not have external mouthparts, so they do not eat during this stage.
- An adult mosquito emerges from a pupa and flies away.

## Adult

- Adult female mosquitoes bite people and animals. Female mosquitoes need blood to produce eggs.
- Adult female *Anopheles* mosquitoes prefer to feed on people or animals, such as cattle.
- Some *Anopheles* male mosquitoes fly in large swarms, usually around dusk, and the females fly in the swarms to mate.
- After blood feeding, the female mosquitoes rest for a few days while the blood digests and the eggs develop. After the eggs develop, the female lays them in the water sources.
- *Anopheles* mosquitoes generally don't fly more than a 1.2 miles (2 km) from their larval habitats.
- *Anopheles* mosquitoes are attracted to dark, sheltered areas for resting during the daytime.

## For more information on diseases spread by mosquitoes:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/malaria/about/biology/index.html>
- [www.cdc.gov/malaria](http://www.cdc.gov/malaria)
- [www.cdc.gov/parasites/lymphaticfilariasis](http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lymphaticfilariasis)



Unique *Anopheles* eggs have floats on either side.



Larvae live in the water.



Pupae live in the water.



An adult mosquito emerges from a pupa.



An adult female mosquito bites a person.