The Life Cycle of Lymphatic Filariasis

**MOSQUITO STAGES**

1. Larvae migrate to a mosquito’s head and proboscis.
2. Larvae migrate to vessels and nodes of the lymphatic system, where they develop into thread-like adult worms.
3. Adult worms, which typically live five to seven years, damage the lymphatic system, causing infections that result in blockages, swelling, and fevers.
4. Fertilized female worms release embryonic offspring, called microfilariae, that enter the blood stream. They circulate at night, when mosquitoes bite, in blood vessels near the skin.
5. A mosquito, feeding on the blood of an infected person, ingests microfilariae, becoming infected.
6. In several stages, inside a mosquito’s midgut, microfilariae develop into infectious larvae.
7. Larvae migrate to vessels and nodes of the lymphatic system, where they develop into thread-like adult worms.
8. An infected mosquito deposits larvae on the skin while biting, and the larvae enter the wound.

**HUMAN STAGES**

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5. A mosquito, feeding on the blood of an infected person, ingests microfilariae, becoming infected.
6. In several stages, inside a mosquito’s midgut, microfilariae develop into infectious larvae.
7. Larvae migrate to vessels and nodes of the lymphatic system, where they develop into thread-like adult worms.
8. An infected mosquito continues the cycle.

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention