

Title: Are Italian pediatricians prepared for emerging arboviral infections? Results of a nationwide survey**Authors:**G. Sturniolo¹, G. Brigadoi¹, D. Doni¹, V. Baldo^{2,3}, A. Lo Vecchio⁴, D. Donà¹**Affiliation:**

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Abstract body

Introduction: Arboviral infections are emerging as an increasing public health concern in Europe due to climate change, vector expansion, and the growing number of autochthonous outbreaks. Early recognition by pediatricians is becoming increasingly important, yet data on their preparedness remain limited. This study aimed to assess knowledge, perceptions, and educational needs regarding arboviral infections among Italian pediatricians.

Materials and Methods: A nationwide cross-sectional survey was conducted between July and November 2025 using an anonymous, self-administered REDCap questionnaire disseminated through the Italian Society of Pediatric Infectious Diseases (SITIP) and via peer-to-peer dissemination among pediatricians.

The questionnaire included items on demographic and professional characteristics, knowledge of arboviral infections, risk perception, clinical practice, preventive measures, and educational needs. Knowledge was assessed using a predefined scoring system and categorized according to the Modified Bloom's taxonomy as poor (<60%), moderate (60–79.9%), or good (≥80%). Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses, including multivariable linear regression, were performed to identify factors associated with knowledge scores.

Results: A total of 160 completed questionnaires were analyzed. Participants included pediatric residents (53.1%), hospital pediatricians (26.9%), pediatric infectious diseases specialists (11.3%), and primary care pediatricians (7.5%). Overall, participants demonstrated a moderate level of knowledge regarding arboviral infections (mean score 23.0±3.7 points; 71.3±11.5%). Knowledge varied across domains, with the highest scores in epidemiology and the lowest in transmission and vector-related aspects (Figure 1). Most participants demonstrated a moderate level of knowledge (95, 59.4%), whereas 36 (22.5%) achieved good knowledge and 29 (18.1%) poor knowledge. Previous arbovirus-specific training was associated with higher knowledge scores in univariate analysis ($p<0.001$); however, in multivariable analysis, professional role remained the only independent predictor of knowledge. Compared with pediatric residents, pediatric infectious diseases specialists (+5.25 points) and hospital pediatricians (+1.33 points) achieved significantly higher knowledge scores, whereas primary care pediatricians did not differ significantly.

Only 41.9% of respondents had previously received training on arboviral infections, although 95.0% expressed interest in further education, particularly on clinical presentation and diagnosis (85.0%) and management and treatment (83.1%) (Figure 1).

Conclusions: Italian pediatricians demonstrated moderate preparedness for emerging arboviral infections, with important knowledge gaps, particularly in transmission and vector-related aspects, and a substantial demand for further education. These findings support the development of targeted educational initiatives to strengthen preparedness for emerging arboviral diseases in Europe.

Grafici/tabelle in allegatohttps://www.infettivologiapediatrica.it/upload/abstractAttach/Attach_ABS_17.jpg*L'autore dichiara che il lavoro non è stato precedentemente presentato ad un altro congresso*