

THE LIFE CYCLE OF INSECTS

There are several stages in the development of insects from eggs to adults.

For example, the life cycle of the mosquito includes an aquatic phase and an aerial phase. The first phase consists of a succession of larval stages leading to a pupa. The aerial phase begins with the emergence of the adults when the pupal skin has split, and is followed by mating. Next, the fertilised female has a blood meal that provides the protein required for her eggs to develop. Each 'bite' then leads to further egg laying.

Infections are spread by the bite. The vector insect is first infected by biting a diseased person or animal. The virus, bacterium or parasite invades the vector. When its salivary glands have been colonised, the vector spreads the pathogen to any new host that it bites.

EXAMPLE OF THE MOSQUITO

