



Jeb Bush
Governor

John O. Agwunobi, M.D., M.B.A.
Secretary

PRESS RELEASE

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FIRST CONFIRMED CASE OF WEST NILE VIRUS IN WALTON COUNTY

Today, Walton County Health Department Director, Dr. Susan Turner, announced that a human case of West Nile (WN) Virus was confirmed in a 49 year old male Walton County resident.

Physicians should contact the Walton County Health Department if they suspect an individual may have West Nile or any other mosquito-borne illness. Symptoms of WN infection include headache, fever, fatigue, dizziness, weakness and confusion. Physicians should submit serum and, if available, cerebrospinal fluid samples to either the Tampa or Jacksonville DOH laboratories.

The best defense against these viruses is prevention. The Walton County Health Department and Florida Department of Health continue to **advise all individuals to remain diligent in their personal mosquito protection efforts. These should include the "5 D's" for prevention:**

- **Dusk and Dawn -- Avoid being outdoors** when mosquitoes are seeking blood, for many species this is during the dusk and dawn hours.
- **Dress -- Wear clothing that covers skin.**
- **DEET** -- When the potential exists for exposure to mosquitoes, repellents containing DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide, or N,N-diethyl-3-methylbenzamide) are recommended. Products with concentrations up to 30% DEET are generally recommended for most situations. (It is not recommended to use DEET on children less than 2 months old. Instead, infants should be kept indoors or mosquito netting used over carriers when mosquitoes are present). If additional protection is necessary, apply a permethrin repellent directly to your clothing. Always read the manufacturer's directions carefully before you put on a repellent.
- **Drainage** -- Check your home to rid it of standing water in which mosquitoes can lay their eggs.

Elimination of breeding sites is one of the keys to prevention. Here are some tips on eliminating mosquito breeding sites:

- *Clean out eaves, troughs and gutters.
- *Remove old tires or drill holes in those used in playgrounds to drain.
- *Turn over or remove empty plastic pots.
- *Pick up all beverage containers and cups.
- *Check tarps on boats or other equipment that may collect water.
- *Pump out bilges on boats.
- *Replace water in birdbaths and pet or other animal feeding dishes at least once a week.
- *Change water in plant trays, including hanging plants, at least once a week.
- *Remove vegetation or obstructions in drainage ditches that prevent the flow of water.
- *For larger bodies of standing water without fish present (fish consume mosquito larvae), citizens may call the Walton County Mosquito Control, to request preventive mosquito treatments (North Walton Mosquito Control 892-8183; South Walton Mosquito Control 267-2112).

The Department of Health continues to conduct statewide surveillance for mosquito-borne illnesses, including West Nile (WN) virus, Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis (EEE), St. Louis Encephalitis (SLE), malaria, and dengue. Residents of Florida are encouraged to report dead birds via the Web site <http://www.wildflorida.org/bird> or by calling their local county health department. For more information on mosquito-borne illnesses, visit DOH's Environmental Health website at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Environmental/hsee/arbo/index.htm>, call the West Nile Virus Hotline at 1-888-880-5782, or your local county health department at (850) 892-8015.



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