



For Immediate Release

October 21, 2005

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MEDICAL ALERT FOR DUVAL COUNTY

-- Human Case of West Nile Virus Confirmed --

Jacksonville, FL (October 21, 2005) - Today, the Duval County Health Department, has announced that Florida Department of Health (DOH) Secretary M. Rony François, M.D., M.S.P.H., Ph.D., has issued a medical alert for Duval County after a confirmed case of West Nile Virus may have contributed to the death of a 45-year-old female county resident. This infection is transmitted by mosquito bites and underscores the need for our community to take the precautions listed below.

State and local public health officials urge all residents to follow 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. Picaridin and oil of lemon eucalyptus are other repellent options. 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.

Tips on Repellent Use

- Always **read label directions carefully** for the approved usage before you apply a repellent. Some repellants are not suitable for children.
- Products with concentrations of up to 30 percent DEET are generally recommended. Other effective mosquito repellents, as reported by the CDC in April 2005, contain Picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus. These products are generally available at local pharmacies. Look for active ingredients to be listed on the product label.
- Apply insect repellent to exposed skin, or onto clothing, but **not under clothing**.
- In protecting children, read label instructions to be sure the repellent is **age-appropriate**. According to the CDC, mosquito repellents containing oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under the age of 3 years. DEET is not recommended on children younger than 2 months old.
- Infants should be kept indoors or mosquito netting should be used over carriers when mosquitoes are present.
- **Avoid applying repellents to the hands of children.** Adults should apply repellent first to their own hands and then transfer it to the child's skin and clothing.
- If additional protection is necessary, apply a permethrin repellent directly to your clothing. Again, always follow the manufacturer's directions.

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. Drain unused swimming pools.
- 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.

Symptoms of WN virus may include headache, fever, fatigue, dizziness, weakness and confusion. People who believe they may have West Nile Virus should contact their health care provider. Florida Department of Health (DOH) laboratories provide testing services for physicians treating patients with clinical signs of mosquito-borne disease. DCHD continues to conduct surveillance for mosquito borne illnesses. Residents are encouraged to report dead birds via the web site <http://myfwc.com/bird/> or contact the Epidemiology Dept. at 791-1575.

For more information on mosquito-borne illnesses, visit DOH's Web site at: www.doh.state.fl.us and select Environmental Health from the pull down menu or visit the CDC Web site at: www.cdc.gov .

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