



Charlie Crist
Governor

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State Surgeon General

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PUTNAM COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
386-326-3200

Horse with EEE confirmed in Putnam County

Public urged to protect against mosquitoes and mosquito-borne viruses

Satsuma, Florida—Due to a recently confirmed horse case of Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) in Putnam County, the Putnam County Health Dept. is encouraging residents of and visitors to Florida to take a number of steps to protect themselves against mosquitoes.

The state monitors animals as sentinels for arboviruses, including Eastern equine encephalitis, (EEE) virus, West Nile (WN) virus and St. Louis encephalitis (SLE) virus, to determine if any of those three viruses are present in the community.

The Florida departments of Health (DOH) and Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), along with other state and local agencies, are working to detect the viruses spread by mosquitoes to humans or animals. Mosquito-borne infections in people can cause headache, fever, dizziness, confusion, movement disorders and coma.

In response to the confirmed case of EEE in a horse from Satsuma Florida, Mosquito Control has increased spraying for mosquitoes in that area. Due to the recent increase in rain and standing water, mosquito populations can be expected to increase. Listed below are some ways to help prevent exposure to mosquito bites and mosquito-borne illness.

PREVENTION OF MOSQUITO BITES AND MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESS

- Minimize outdoor activities between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active
- When outdoors and mosquitoes are present, wear shoes, socks, long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt.
- Use mosquito repellent as directed by the manufacturer
- Repair residential screening, including porches and patios, if tears or other openings are found
- Eliminate mosquito breeding sites.

TIPS ON ELIMINATING 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 or 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 baskets, at least once a week.
- Remove vegetation or obstructions in drainage ditches that prevent flow of water.



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TIPS ON REPELLENT USE

- Always read label directions carefully for the approved usage before applying a repellent to skin. Some repellents are not suitable for children.
- Products with concentrations of up to 30 percent DEET are generally recommended. Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and IR3535 are other repellent options.
- 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.

DOH continues to conduct statewide surveillance for mosquito borne illnesses, including West Nile virus infections, Eastern equine encephalitis, St. Louis encephalitis, malaria, and dengue. Residents of Florida are encouraged to report dead birds via the web site <http://myfwc.com/bird/>. For more information on mosquito-borne illnesses, visit Doha's Environmental Health web site at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/community/arboviral/index.htm>, call the West Nile Virus Hotline at 1-888-880-5782, or call your local county health department at 386-326-3200