

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT IS INVESTIGATING A LOCALLY ACQUIRED
CASE
OF DENGUE FEVER AND URGES PREVENTION METHODS**

The Hillsborough County Health Department is investigating a locally acquired case of dengue fever in the Seminole Heights area of Tampa. This case follows a recently identified case from the same household who was infected while traveling in the Caribbean. An additional Seminole Heights resident, who traveled on the same trip to the Caribbean, was also infected with dengue fever while there.

Dengue fever (pronounced den' gee) is a disease transmitted to humans by the bite of an infected mosquito. Dengue is not spread directly from person-to-person.

Mosquitoes usually bite at dusk and dawn, but the mosquitoes that carry dengue bite during the day as well – especially indoors, in shady areas, or when the weather is cloudy.

In the Western Hemisphere, the *Aedes aegypti* (pronounced edis egypt-tie) mosquito is the main transmitter of dengue viruses.

In some cases, the *Aedes albopictus* mosquito has also transmitted the disease. Both of these mosquitoes are present in Hillsborough County, however, there have not been any locally acquired dengue cases here in recent history. It is estimated that there are over 100 million cases of dengue worldwide each year.

Symptoms of dengue include high fever, severe headache, muscle aches, joint and bone pain and rash. There is no specific medication for treatment of a dengue infection. It is important that persons who think they have dengue contact their doctor for evaluation and testing.

Hillsborough County Mosquito Control will continue to inspect and treat the Seminole Heights area as needed.

Regular rain storms give mosquitoes a chance to breed, so all Hillsborough County residents are asked to use preventive measures to help stop the spread of mosquito borne illness.

“Something as seemingly innocent as a water-filled bottle cap or a clogged gutter can become a breeding ground for mosquitoes,” said Warren McDougle, Epidemiology Program Manager, Hillsborough County Health Department. “We really need the assistance of our community to reduce the mosquito population, especially since we’ve had so much rain in the past several weeks.”

Helpful mosquito prevention tips:

- Empty any standing water around your home weekly (including buckets, tires, bird baths and garbage cans) where mosquitoes can lay their eggs.
- Avoid outdoor activities when mosquitoes are most active.
- Use DEET (with concentrations up to 30%) or other repellents containing picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus. It is not recommended to use DEET on children less than 2-months of age. Always read manufacturer’s directions carefully before applying repellent.
- More information is available @ <http://www.cdc.gov/Dengue>
- Hillsborough County Customer Call Center: (813) 635-6400

Weekly updates of mosquito disease activity across the state can be viewed at: <http://myfloridaeh.com/medicine/arboviral/surveillance.htm>

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