

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PROVIDES ONLINE RESOURCES REGARDING  
HANSEN'S DISEASE OR LEPROSY**

**TALLAHASSEE**—In an effort to facilitate media interviews regarding Hansen's disease, formerly known as leprosy, the Florida Department of Health has made available a broadcast-quality, downloadable interview with Deputy State Epidemiologist Dr. Carina Blackmore. The video can be accessed here: <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/leprosy/index.html>

In Florida, between two and 12 cases are reported each year. So far in 2015, nine cases have been reported in Florida residents. The incubation period for Hansen's disease is two to 10 years, which makes it inherently difficult to identify the exposure source.

At this point, the role of armadillos in the transmission of Hansen's disease to humans is not fully understood. There is a particular strain of Hansen's disease identified in people in the Southeastern U.S. that has also been identified in armadillos in the same region.

The department recommends that people avoid contact with wild animals, such as armadillos and to take precautions if they must handle them by using gloves and washing their hands before and after exposure.

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The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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**Florida Department of Health**

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