

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

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Contact: Renay Rouse, Martin County, 772-631-6008
Arlease Hall, St. Lucie County, 772-370-1391

For Immediate Release

HEALTH ADVISORY ISSUED FOR DENGUE FEVER MOSQUITO-BORNE DISEASE

(Martin and St. Lucie Counties, FL) The Florida Department of Health is urging residents to take precautions against mosquito-borne illness following three confirmed cases of locally-acquired dengue fever in Martin and St. Lucie County residents. The residents had no history of recent international travel, so the exposure was likely to be from local mosquitoes. After an investigation conducted by the Florida Department of Health in Martin and St. Lucie County, it appears that the exposure was from local mosquitoes in the Rio neighborhood near Jensen Beach.

Locally-acquired dengue is rare in the United States and this is the second case of this type in Martin County. The previous case was contracted by a resident of Port Salerno in August 2011. There have been no previous locally-acquired cases of dengue in St. Lucie County.

Dengue Fever (pronounced den' gee) is a disease transmitted to humans by the bite of an infected mosquito, not person to person. In the Western Hemisphere, the *Aedes aegypti* (pronounced edis egyp-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 found in large numbers in Martin and St. Lucie Counties. It is estimated that there are over 100 million cases of dengue worldwide each year.

"Though some people may experience little to no symptoms, the most common symptoms of dengue include high fever, severe headache, joint and bone pain and rash." said Karlette Peck, Health Officer for the Martin County Health Department. "People who have symptoms of dengue should contact their health provider immediately."

Mosquito Control in Martin and St. Lucie Counties have begun inspecting and treating properties in the affected areas.

The Florida Department of Health continues to advise the public to remain diligent in their personal mosquito protection efforts. These should include remembering "**Drain and Cover**".

DRAIN standing water to stop mosquitoes from multiplying

- Drain water from garbage cans, house gutters, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flower pots or any other containers where sprinkler or rain water has collected.
- Discard old tires, drums, bottles, cans, pots and pans, broken appliances and other items that aren't being used.
- Empty and clean birdbaths and pet's water bowls at least once or twice a week.
- Protect boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that don't accumulate water.

- Maintain swimming pools in good condition and appropriately chlorinated. Empty plastic swimming pools when not in use.

COVER skin with clothing or repellent

- CLOTHING - Wear shoes, socks, and long pants and long-sleeves. This type of protection may be necessary for people who must work in areas where mosquitoes are present.
- REPELLENT - Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing.
 - Always use repellents according to the label. Repellents with DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and IR3535 are effective.
 - Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than 2 months old.

COVER doors and windows with screens to keep mosquitoes out of your house

- Repair broken screening on windows, doors, porches, and patios.

Tips on Repellent Use

- Always read label directions carefully for the approved usage before you apply a repellent. Some repellents are not suitable for children.
- Products with concentrations of up to 30 percent DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide) are generally recommended. Other US Environmental Protection Agency-approved repellents contain Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535. 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 three years. DEET is not recommended on children younger than two months old.
- 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.

For more information on what repellent is right for you consider using the EPA search tool to help you choose skin-applied repellent products:

<http://cfpub.epa.gov/oppref/insect/#searchform>

DOH continues to conduct statewide surveillance for mosquito borne illnesses, including West Nile virus infections, Eastern equine encephalitis, St. Louis encephalitis, malaria, and dengue.

For more information on mosquito-borne illnesses, visit DOH's website at

<http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/arboviral/index.html> or call your local county health department.

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