

Mission:

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



Rick Scott
Governor

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Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT ISSUES MOSQUITO- BORNE ILLNESSES ADVISORY

-Two horses are confirmed to have had Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) virus-

Alachua County, FL – The Alachua County Health Department emphasizes the importance of protection against mosquito-borne diseases after receiving notification that two horses in southern Alachua County have been confirmed with Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) virus. EEE is caused by a virus transmitted by mosquitoes and can infect humans. “Because the virus has been detected in the horses, the risk of transmission to humans has been increased” said, Anthony Dennis, Environmental Health Director, Florida Department of Health in Alachua County.

Symptoms of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) may include headache, fever, fatigue, dizziness, weakness and confusion. Physicians should contact the local county health department if they suspect an individual may have a mosquito-borne illness. State of Florida Department of Health laboratories provide testing services for physicians treating patients with clinical signs of mosquito-borne diseases.

Alachua County Health Department continues surveillance and prevention efforts and encourages everyone to take basic precautions to help limit exposure to mosquitoes by following the health department’s recommendations. The Alachua County Health Department is also recommending horse and livestock owners contact their veterinarian about vaccinations against mosquito borne diseases.

To prevent mosquito-borne diseases, the Florida Department of Health recommends practicing Drain and Cover:

DRAIN and COVER

DRAIN standing water to stop mosquitoes from multiplying.

- **DRAIN:** water from garbage cans, house gutters, 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:** The water balance (pool chemistry) of swimming pools. Empty plastic swimming pools when not in use.

COVER your skin with clothing and use mosquito repellent.

- **CLOTHING:** If you must be outside when mosquitoes are active, cover up. Wear shoes, socks, long pants, and long sleeves.
- **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.

COVER doors and windows with screens to keep mosquitoes out.

Keep mosquitoes out of your house. Repair broken screens on windows, doors, porches, and patios.

Other Prevention Measures

The best way to prevent mosquito-borne disease is to avoid mosquito bites. By following the mosquito hygiene checklist and the 'Drain and Cover' prevention, you can help protect yourself and your family from mosquito-borne disease.

Rid the wrigglers: lose the larvae.

Mosquitoes lay their eggs where there is moisture. It takes only a few days for an egg to grow into an adult mosquito, which can live for several weeks. During that time, an adult female mosquito can lay many eggs. In order to produce eggs, the adult female seeks a host (such as a bird, a horse, or a human) to provide a blood meal. Some species of adult mosquitoes can fly two miles from their breeding sites (even further if blown by the wind). Elimination of mosquito breeding sites is one of the keys to prevention.

- Remove standing water in old tires, buckets, garbage cans or any other containers.
- Clean out gutters. Check flat roofs that may have poor drainage.
- Cover barrels and trash containers tightly with a lid or with a fine mesh screening material.
- Empty plastic wading pools at least once a week. Store them indoors when not in use.
- Change the water in bird baths and pets' water bowls at least once a week.
- Empty the water in plant pots at least once a week.
- Turn over or remove empty plastic pots.
- Remove old tires or drill holes in those used in playgrounds to drain.
- Level the ground around your home so water can run off.
- Fill in holes or depressions near your home that collect water.
- Pick up all beverage containers and cups.
- Store boats covered or upside down.
- Check tarps on boats or other equipment that may collect water.
- Pump out bilges on boats.
- Treat standing water with products that kill mosquito larvae. These are available at home improvement stores and garden centers.
- Fill in tree holes and hollow stumps that hold water.
- Stock your water garden with mosquito-eating fish like minnows, gambusia, goldfish or guppies.
- Remove vegetation or blockages in drainage ditches so that water can flow through.
- Repair screening on windows, doors, porches and patios.

Repellent Information

- 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. Other EPA-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 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.
- If additional protection is necessary, apply a permethrin repellent directly to your clothing. Again, always follow the manufacturer's directions.

For more information, see the CDC's guidelines:

http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/ga/insect_repellent.htm or

EPA guidelines: <http://cfpub.epa.gov/oppref/insect/>

Do not hesitate to report mosquito problem to your municipality mosquito control or the Alachua County Health Department at 352-334-7930.

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