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HEALTH OFFICIALS AGAIN REINFORCE MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESSES ADVISORY

Asymptomatic case of West Nile virus confirmed in Bay County



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PANAMA CITY, Fla.— The Florida Department of Health in Bay County (DOH-Bay) is advising residents of an increase in mosquito-borne disease activity in areas of Bay County. **A human case of West Nile virus infection** is confirmed.

This is the **first human case of mosquito-borne illness** in Bay County in 2019. Bay County Mosquito Control, Beach Mosquito Control District, and DOH-Bay continue surveillance, prevention, and education efforts.

Fortunately, **most people** infected with West Nile Virus **do not feel sick**. About **1 in 5** people who are infected **develop a fever** and other symptoms such as **headache, pain, and fatigue**. Mild infections are typically overcome with little or no medical intervention within a matter of weeks. **Less than one-percent** of infected people **develop a serious, sometimes fatal, illness**. **Symptoms** typically appear between **two and 14 days** after the bite of an infected mosquito. People **over the age of 60** and individuals with **weakened immune systems** are at an **increased risk** for severe disease.

In **June**, DOH-Bay issued the mosquito-borne illness advisory following **two cases of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) in horses**. The advisory was reinforced in **July** after a **flock of sentinel chickens** tested positive for the virus.

DOH-Bay reminds residents and visitors to **avoid being bitten by mosquitoes** and to **take basic precautions** to help limit exposure.

To protect yourself from mosquitoes, you should remember to “**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, para-menthane-diol, and IR3535 are effective.**
 - Use **mosquito netting** to protect **children younger than 2 months old.**

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 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-approved repellents contain **picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-menthane-diol, 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 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (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.**

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

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

For more information on what repellent is right for you, consider using the Environmental Protection Agency's search tool to help you choose skin-applied repellent products:

[http://cfpub.epa.gov/oppref/insect/#searchform.](http://cfpub.epa.gov/oppref/insect/#searchform)

The Department continues to conduct statewide surveillance for mosquito-borne illnesses, including West Nile virus infections, Eastern equine encephalitis, St. Louis encephalitis, malaria, chikungunya and dengue. Residents of Florida are encouraged to report dead birds via the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's site - <http://legacy.myfwc.com/bird/default.asp>. For more information, visit DOH's website at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/%5C/diseases-and-conditions/mosquito-borne-diseases/index.html> or contact your county health department.

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