



COLLIER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESS ADVISORY

The Collier County Health Department (CCHD) and the Florida Department of Health are issuing a mosquito-borne advisory after a second positive report of a horse with Eastern Equine Encephalitis virus (EEEV) in Collier County in the past two weeks. The virus is maintained in a cycle between mosquitoes and birds in freshwater swampy areas, sometimes biting a horse or a human.

EEEV causes severe illness in humans and horses. Symptoms in humans develop 3-10 days after the bite of an infected mosquito and begin with a sudden onset of fever, general muscle pains, and a headache of increasing severity. Symptoms can become more severe over 1-2 weeks and infected individuals will either recover or show onset of inflammation of the brain (encephalitis) with seizures and vomiting.

Human cases are usually preceded by those in horses. Disease transmission does not occur directly from person to person. Those at highest risk are people who live in or visit woodland areas, people who work or participate in outdoor recreational activities where there is greater exposure to potentially infected mosquitoes.

The CCHD reminds residents and visitors to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes. Everyone is encouraged to take the basic steps to limit exposure by following these recommendations:

To protect yourself from mosquitoes, you should remember the "**5Ds**":

- **Dusk and Dawn** -- Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are seeking blood. For many species, this is during the dusk and dawn hours.
- **Dress** -- Wear clothing that covers most of your skin.
- **DEET** -- When the potential exists for exposure to mosquitoes, repellents containing DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide, or N,N-diethyl-3-methylbenzamide) are recommended. Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and IR3535 are other repellent options.
- **Drainage** -- Check around your home to rid the area of standing water, which is where mosquitoes can lay their eggs.

Some effective repellants are DEET (N,N-diethyl-3-methylbenzamide), picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and IR3535. Always **read label directions carefully** for the approved usage before you apply a repellent. Some repellents are not suitable for children. Elimination of breeding sites is one of the keys to prevention.

Tips on Eliminating Mosquito Breeding Sites

- Clean out eaves, troughs and gutters.
- Remove old tires or drill holes in those used in playgrounds to drain.
- Turn over or remove empty plastic pots.
- Pick up all beverage containers and cups.
- Check tarps on boats or other equipment that may collect water.

- Pump out bilges on boats.
- Replace water in birdbaths and pet or other animal feeding dishes at least once a week.
- Change water in plant trays, including hanging plants, at least once a week.
- Remove vegetation or obstructions in drainage ditches that prevent the flow of water.

There are vaccines available for use in horses in protecting them against EEE, WEE, and WNV. Horse owners should contact their veterinarian about the appropriate use of these vaccines.

For more information on mosquito-borne illnesses, visit DOH's Environmental Health web site at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/arboviral/index.html> or call the Collier County Health Department at 239-252-8226. For a two-page Mosquito-borne Disease in Florida Fact sheet describing the transmission cycle, symptoms of illness and mosquito-borne disease prevention go to http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/arboviral/pdfs/EducationalMaterials/Arbo_facsheet_Color_Eng.