

Mission:

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



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Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MOSQUITO ADVISORY: HEALTH OFFICIALS CONFIRM FIRST CASE OF WEST NILE IN POLK

~Floridians are encouraged to DRAIN and COVER to avoid mosquito-borne illnesses~

Bartow- The Florida Department of Health in Polk County (FDOH-Polk) confirms Polk's first case of West Nile Virus (WNV) in a human. This disease is spread by bites from infected mosquitoes. The female Lake Wales resident is resting and doing well. Residents are advised to avoid mosquito bites by taking the necessary precautions. This is the seventh confirmed case in the State this year.

"Avoiding mosquito bites is the key to preventing infection with West Nile Virus and other mosquito-borne diseases," said Dr. Ulyee Choe, director of the FDOH-Polk. "Floridians and visitors are encouraged to take precautionary measures to help reduce the chance of being bitten. 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.

- Wear shoes, socks, long pants and long-sleeves.
- 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.

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.

Most people (70-80%) who become infected with West Nile Virus do not develop any symptoms. About 1 in 5 people who are infected will develop a fever with other symptoms such as headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. People typically develop symptoms between three and 14 days after they are bitten by the infected mosquito. Most people with this infection recover completely, but fatigue and weakness can last for weeks or months.

There is no specific treatment for WNV infection. If you experience symptoms of West Nile Virus, consult with your health care provider and protect yourself against further mosquito bites. Avoiding mosquito bites while you are sick will help to protect others from getting infected.

For more information visit <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/west-nilevirus/index.html> or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm>.

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