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Health Issue Mosquito-Borne Illnesses Advisory

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Pasco County, Fla.—The Florida Department of Health in Pasco County (DOH-Pasco) advises residents there has been an increase in mosquito-borne disease activity in areas of Pasco County.

Eastern equine encephalitis virus was detected in a group of sick emus. The risk of transmission to humans has increased. Pasco County Mosquito Control and DOH-Pasco continue surveillance and prevention efforts.

DOH-Pasco 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, flowerpots, or any other containers where sprinkler or rainwater 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, 2-undecanone 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.
- Apply insect repellent to exposed skin or clothing, but not under clothing.
- Treat clothing and gear with products containing 0.5% permethrin. **Do not** apply permethrin directly to skin.

- Some repellents are not suitable for children. Ensure repellent is safe for children and age appropriate:
 - Mosquito repellents containing lemon eucalyptus oil or para-menthane-diol **should not** be used on children under the age of 3 years.
 - DEET **is not recommended** on children younger than 2 months old.
 - Avoid applying repellents to the hands of children.
 - Parents should apply repellent to their hands first and then transfer it to the child's skin and clothing.

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.

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 to the [Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's site](#).

For more information, visit the [Department's website](#) or contact DOH-Pasco at 727-619-0300.

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