

June 19, 2023

HEALTH OFFICIALS ISSUE MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESSES ALERT



Contact:

G. Steve Huard, Public Information Officer
Florida Department of Health – Sarasota County
Gerald.Huard@flhealth.gov
(941) 302-1058

Christopher Tittel, Public Information Officer
Florida Department of Health – Manatee County
Christopher.Tittel@flhealth.gov
(941) 720-6145

Sarasota, Fla –The Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County and Manatee County (DOH-Sarasota and DOH-Manatee) have issued a mosquito-borne illness alert for Sarasota and Manatee counties. On May 26, 2023, DOH released information on the first confirmed local case of malaria, who was treated and has recovered. Since this advisory was issued, another case has been confirmed and the patient is being treated. Residents in these areas should take precautions, such as wearing long sleeve shirts and pants, applying bug spray, and avoiding areas with high mosquito populations, especially during sunrise and sunset when mosquitos are most active.

The Florida Department of Health (Department) is working closely with local partners and county mosquito control. Aerial and ground mosquito spraying is being conducted in these areas to mitigate the risk of further transmission.

Malaria is not transmitted from person to person. Only infected Anopheles mosquitoes can transmit malaria to humans. This case has been identified as the P. vivax species of malaria, which is not as fatal as other species. Effective treatment is readily available through hospitals and other health care providers. Individuals in this area with symptoms of fever, chills, sweats, nausea/vomiting, and headache should seek immediate medical attention.

DOH-Sarasota and DOH-Manatee continue to advise the public to remain diligent in their personal mosquito protection efforts by remembering 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 keep 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. Some repellents are not suitable for children.
- In protecting children, read label instructions to be sure the repellent is age appropriate. Mosquito repellents containing oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol 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.
- Apply insect repellent that contains DEET (10-30%), picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-menthane-diol, 2-undecanone 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.
- Treat clothing and gear with products containing 0.5% permethrin. Do not apply permethrin directly to skin. 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>.

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 at <https://app.myfwc.com/FWRI/AvianMortality/>.

For more information, visit the Department's website at www.floridahealth.gov/%5C/diseases-and-conditions/mosquito-borne-diseases/index.html or call DOH-Sarasota at (941) 861-2873, or DOH Manatee at (941) 748-0747.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](https://twitter.com/HealthyFla) and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/HealthyFla). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit www.FloridaHealth.gov.