



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESS ALERT CONTINUED

--Leon County Health Department announces first human case of West Nile Virus--

Tallahassee—The Leon County Health Department continues its mosquito-borne illness alert for Leon County. The first human case of West Nile virus (WNV) in Leon County this year has been confirmed today. The virus is spread by the bite of a mosquito. It is not spread from person to person. The patient is a 22 year-old male resident of Leon County. Homer J. Rice, RS, MPH, PhD, administrator of the Leon County Health Department, reminds residents and visitors to continue to protect themselves against mosquito bites.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about one in 150 people infected with WNV will develop severe illness. Symptoms can include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness and paralysis. These symptoms may last several weeks, and neurological effects may be permanent. People should call their health care providers if they think they might have contracted WNV.

"We will continue to collaborate with Leon County Mosquito Control to monitor the sentinel chickens for the virus," said Rice, "And the public should continue to be diligent in their personal mosquito protection efforts."

These should include remembering to "**Drain and Cover.**"

DRAIN standing water to stop mosquitoes from multiplying.

- Drain water from garbage cans, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flower pots or any other containers where 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** - If you must be outside when mosquitoes are active, cover up. Wear shoes, socks, long pants and long sleeves.
- **REPELLENT** - Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing. Always use repellents according to the label's instructions. Repellents with 10-30% DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and IR3535 are effective.
- Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than 2 months old.

COVER doors and windows with screens:

- Keep mosquitoes out of your house. Repair broken screening on windows, doors, porches and patios.

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Page Two of Two

Residents of Florida are also encouraged to report dead birds via the website <http://www.MyFWC.com/bird>.

For more information about mosquito-borne illnesses:

- Visit DOH's Environmental Public Health website at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/arboviral/index.html> or call the Leon County Health Department at 850-606-8350.
- Read the weekly Florida Arbovirus Surveillance Report, which publishes the number of infections, at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/medicine/arboviral/Weekly-Summary.html>.

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