

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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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH URGES THE PUBLIC TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM MOSQUITOES FOLLOWING EASTERN EQUINE ENCEPHALITIS OUTBREAK

OCALA—The Florida Department of Health in Marion County reissued its prevention message for Florida’s residents and visitors to protect themselves against eastern equine encephalitis after confirmed cases in northern Marion County near Micanopy.

Three horses in the Micanopy area of northwestern Marion County recently tested positive for the eastern equine encephalitis virus.

“While the chance of humans contracting EEE is low, we still need to take precautions against mosquito bites,” said Dan Dooley, Environmental Health administrator at the Florida Department of Health in Marion County. “These precautions will be important to limiting the spread of mosquito-borne diseases to humans.”

Mosquito-borne infections such as EEE can cause headache, fever, dizziness, confusion, movement disorders and coma. Physicians should contact the local county health department if they suspect an individual may have a mosquito-borne illness. Horse and livestock owners should contact their veterinarians about vaccinations against mosquito borne diseases.

There is no human vaccine for preventing EEE. The best defense against these viruses is prevention. The best preventive measure for residents living in areas infested with mosquitoes that carry an EEE virus is to eliminate the places where the mosquito lays her eggs, primarily artificial containers that hold water.

To prevent mosquitoes from living and multiplying around your home or business:

DRAIN standing water:

- Drain water from garbage cans, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flowerpots or any other containers where sprinkler or rainwater has collected.
- Discarded 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 your 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. Repellents with 10-30 percent 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.

For more information visit the Florida Department of Health Bureau of Epidemiology website at www.FloridasHealth.com/Environment/medicine/arboviral or call the Bureau's hotline at 1-888-880-5782.

Additionally, information on these arboviruses can be found at the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' website, www.flaes.org/westnile2001/.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Division of Vector Borne Infectious Diseases website can be found at www.cdc.gov/ncezid/dvbd/.

You can contact the Florida Department of Health in Marion County for information at 352-622-7744

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