

Mission:

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



Rick Scott
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 3, 2014

Contact: Deanna Krautner, PIO
727 861-5250 ext 162

**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
PASCO COUNTY - MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESS ADVISORY**

Pasco - The Florida Department of Health in Pasco County (DOH-Pasco) report that 2 horses in the county have tested positive for Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) one in Central and one on the East side of Pasco. This could pose a risk of transmission to humans. EEE in humans is a rare disease that is caused by a virus spread by infected mosquitoes. EEE virus (EEEV) is one of a group of mosquito-transmitted viruses that can cause inflammation of the brain (encephalitis). This virus is transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito. Disease transmission does not occur directly from person to person. Those at highest risk are people who live in or visit woodland areas, people who work or participate in outdoor recreational activities where there is greater exposure to potentially infected mosquitoes. Mosquito-borne infections in people can cause headache, fever, dizziness, confusion, movement disorders and coma.

DOH-Pasco reminds residents and visitors to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes that may cause encephalitis disease. Pasco County Mosquito Control and the health department continue surveillance and prevention efforts and encourage everyone to take basic precautions to help limit exposure.

To protect yourself from mosquitoes, you should remember to practice the "5 D's":

- * Dusk and Dawn - Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are seeking blood.
- * Dress - Wear clothing that covers most of your skin.
- * DEET - When the potential exists for exposure to mosquitoes, repellents containing up to 30 percent DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) are recommended. Other effective mosquito repellents include picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and IR3535. Always read label directions carefully for the approved usage before you apply. Some repellents are not suitable for children.
- * Drainage - Check around your home to rid the area of standing water, where mosquitoes lay eggs.

Elimination of breeding sites is one of the keys to prevention.

- * Clean out eaves, troughs and gutters.
- * Remove old tires or drill holes in those used in playgrounds to allow drainage.
- * Turn over or remove plastic pots and pick up all beverage containers and cups.
- * Check tarps on boats or other equipment that may collect water.
- * Pump out bilges on boats.
- * Replace water in birdbaths, animal dishes, and plant trays at least once a week.
- * Change water in plant trays, including hanging plants, at least once a week.
- * Remove vegetation or obstructions in drainage ditches that prevent the flow of water.

While there is no vaccine to protect humans from EEE, horse owners should contact their veterinarian for information on vaccination of horses against mosquito borne diseases.

DOH continues to conduct statewide surveillance for mosquito borne illnesses, including West Nile virus infections, Eastern equine encephalitis, St. Louis encephalitis, malaria, and dengue. Residents of Florida are encouraged to report dead birds via the web site <http://myfwc.com/bird/>. For more information on mosquito-borne illnesses, visit DOH's web site at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/mosquito-borne-diseases/index.html> or call your local county health department at 352- 521-1450 option 6.

###