



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Brevard County Health Department Issues Advisory for Mosquito-Borne Illness Health Department Urges County Residents to Protect Themselves**

(BREVARD COUNTY) – The Brevard County Health Department urges residents to take precautions to protect themselves from mosquito bites in order to decrease their risk of contracting West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis that has been seen in surrounding counties. Several of our sentinel Chicken flocks have tested positive for the West Nile (WN) virus; therefore, the risk of transmission to humans has been increased.

Area physicians should contact their county's health department if they suspect an individual may have contracted a mosquito-borne illness, in Brevard County call 321-454-7111. Department of Health laboratories provide testing services for physicians treating patients with clinical signs of mosquito-borne disease.

It takes from 2 to 15 days after the bite of an infected mosquito for an individual to develop symptoms of West Nile Virus. Symptoms may include fever, headache, confusion, tiredness, and body aches, occasionally with a skin rash (on the trunk of the body) and swollen lymph glands.

To reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes, DOH recommends that individuals remain diligent in their personal prevention efforts. These should include the **"5 D's"** for prevention:

- **Dusk and Dawn** – Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are seeking blood. For many species, this is during the dusk and dawn hours.
- **Dress** – Wear clothing that covers most of your skin.
- **Deet** – When the potential exists for exposure to mosquitoes, repellents containing DEET (N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide, or N, N-diethyl-3-methylbenzamide) are recommended. Picaridin and oil of lemon eucalyptus are other repellent options.
- **Drainage** – Check around your home to rid the area of standing water, which is where mosquitoes can lay their eggs. **Make sure that pools and spas have continuous circulation and appropriate chlorination to prevent mosquitoes from laying eggs.**

### **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.
- Products with concentrations of up to 30 percent DEET are generally recommended. Other effective mosquito repellents, as reported by the CDC in April 2005, contain Picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus. These products are generally available at local pharmacies. Look for active ingredients listed on the product label.

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- Apply insect repellent to exposed skin, or onto clothing, but not under clothing.
- In protecting children, read label instructions to be sure the repellent is age-appropriate. According to the CDC, mosquito repellents containing oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under the age of three years. DEET is not recommended on children younger than two months old.
- Infants should be kept indoors, or mosquito netting should be used over carriers when mosquitoes are present.
- 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.
- If additional protection is necessary, apply a permethrin repellent directly to your clothing. Again, always follow the manufacturer's directions.

### **Tips on Eliminating Mosquito Breeding Sites:**

Getting rid of breeding sites is one of the keys to prevention. Mosquitoes breed in standing water, so check your yard at least once a week.

- Clean out eaves and gutters.
  - Remove old tires or drill drainage holes in those used in playgrounds.
  - Turn over or remove empty pots.
  - Pick up beverage containers and cups.
  - Check tarps on boats or equipment that may collect water.
  - Store canoes and small boats upside-down.
  - Replace water in birdbaths and pet feeding dishes.
  - Change water in plant trays, including hanging plants.
  - Also, make sure window and door screens are in good condition.
- Have an older neighbor or family member? See if they need help installing or repairing screens.

DOH continues to conduct statewide surveillance for mosquito-borne illnesses, including WN and Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis (EEE), St. Louis Encephalitis (SLE), malaria and dengue. Residents are encouraged to report dead birds via the web site <http://myfwc.com/bird/> . <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/environmentt/community/arboviral/index.htm>, or the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm>. You may also call the WNV Hotline at 1-888-880-5781 or contact the Brevard County Health Department, Environmental Health Services at 321-633-2100.

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