

July 27th, 2020

DOH-PALM BEACH OFFICIALS ISSUE MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESS ADVISORY



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Palm Beach County, FL—The Florida Department of Health in Palm Beach County (DOH-Palm Beach) today advised residents there has been an increase in mosquito-borne disease activity in areas of Palm Beach County. A locally acquired human case of West Nile illness has been confirmed and there is a heightened concern additional residents may become ill.

Palm Beach County Mosquito Control and DOH-Palm Beach continue surveillance and prevention efforts. County Health Director for DOH-Palm Beach, Dr. Alina Alonso, reminds residents and visitors to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes and to take basic precautions to help limit exposure.

Most West Nile virus infections (approximately 80%) are asymptomatic. In those people that do develop symptoms, most experience a mild illness termed West Nile Fever (WNF) that is characterized by headache, fever, pain, and fatigue.

The last human cases of West Nile Virus in Palm Beach County were two in 2018, however both were imported cases.

To protect yourself from mosquitoes, you should remember to “**Drain and Cover**”. Please see some tips below. For more information please see this section of the DOH Website:

<http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/west-nile-virus/index.html>

DRAIN standing water to stop mosquitoes from multiplying.

- Drain water from garbage cans, house gutters, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flower pots or any other containers where sprinkler or rain 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 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.

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 via the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's site - <http://legacy.myfwc.com/bird/default.asp>. For more information, visit DOH's website at www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/mosquito-borne-diseases/index.html or contact your county health department.

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