



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 18, 2003

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***** MEDICAL ALERT*****

Orange County Health Department and the Florida Department of Health (DOH) have confirmed a human encephalitis case caused by the Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) virus. The case was reported in a 3-year-old female resident of Orange County.

The Orange County Health Department and the Department of Health urge all Floridians and visitors to take precautions against mosquito bites.

Health officials continue to stress 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 skin)
- * DEET (use mosquito repellents including DEET [N, N diethyl-m-toluamide] on skin and pyrethrins on clothing when you are outside)
- * Drainage (check your home to rid it of standing water in which mosquitoes can lay their eggs).

The Orange County Health Department and the Department of Health continue to track mosquito-borne viruses in dead birds collected by citizens, through the regular testing of sentinel chickens, through horse test results provided by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and through reports of human disease from Florida physicians.

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

Tips on Eliminating Mosquito Breeding Sites

- * Clean out eaves, troughs and gutters.
- * Remove old tires or drill holes in those used in playgrounds to drain.
- * Turn over or remove empty plastic pots.
- * 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 and pet or other animal feeding dishes 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.

Physicians are urged to report all cases of encephalitis and meningitis to their local health department. Laboratory testing by the DOH is available to physicians free-of-charge.



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For more information on WNV, EEE and SLE, visit DOH's Web site at <<<http://www9.myflorida.com/Environment/hsee/arbo/index.htm>>> or call the Bureau of Community Environmental Health at (850) 245-4299.

Additionally, information on WNV and EEE in horses can be found at the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' website, <<http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/ai.html>>, or by calling (850) 410-0900. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission maintains a website for reporting dead wild birds at <<<http://wildflorida.org/bird>>>.

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