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For Immediate Release

Date: September 10, 2003
Contact: Judith Hartner, M.D., M.P.H., Director, 332-9510

Human Case of West Nile Virus Confirmed in Lee County

Lee County Health Department Director Judith Hartner, M.D., M.P.H., today confirmed Lee County's second human case of West Nile Virus in 2003; the patient is a 51 year old female.

Symptoms include fever, headache, dizziness, and weakness. Physicians should contact the Health Department if they suspect an individual may have a mosquito-borne illness. Florida Department of Health laboratories provide testing services for physicians treating patients with clinical signs of mosquito-borne disease.

The Lee County Health Department continues to advise the public to remain diligent in their personal mosquito protection 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 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. Products with concentrations up to 30% DEET are generally recommended for most situations. (It is not recommended to use DEET on children less than 2 months old. Instead, infants should be kept indoors or mosquito netting used over carriers when mosquitoes are present). If additional protection is necessary, apply a permethrin repellent directly to your clothing. Always read the manufacturer's directions carefully before you put on a repellent.
- **Drainage** -- Check your home to rid it of standing water in which mosquitoes can lay their eggs.

Because the *culex* variety of mosquito – the kind responsible for disease transmission – lays its eggs on the water's surface, our recent heavy rains have caused an increase in the mosquito population. Eggs hatch within 24 hours and become flying, biting adults 5-6 days later. With continuous rains, this cycle is constantly repeated. *As long as there is standing water, the culex mosquito will breed and pose a threat.*

Elimination of breeding sites is one of the keys to prevention. Tips for the homeowner can be found at the Lee County Mosquito Control website at <http://www.lcmcd.org> or by calling the agency at 694-2174.

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