



**For Immediate Release**  
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### **Local Health Experts Caution Residents About Mosquito-Borne Illness**

**Brooksville-** State surveillance data has indicated a continued rise in mosquito-borne illness cases, such as West Nile virus (WNV), Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and Highlands J virus (HJV). Recently a number of horses, birds and now, two people have died from such illnesses in nearby counties.

Hernando County Mosquito Control and the Hernando County Health Department want to remind area residents and visitors to be vigilant about mosquito bite prevention.

According to Dr. Guangye Hu, Hernando Mosquito Control Director, "Residents can reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes by following the 5 D's for prevention. These prevention steps include:

- ◆ **Dawn and Dusk-** 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.
- ◆ **Drain-** Check around your home to rid the area of all standing water. Mosquitoes can lay their eggs in as little as 1/4" of water. Make sure that pools and spas have continuous circulation and appropriate chlorination to prevent mosquitoes from laying eggs.

For additional mosquito control information, visit <http://www.hernandocounty.us/mosquito/>

"Area physicians who suspect an individual may have contracted a mosquito-borne illness should contact their local health department", said Al Gray, MPH, Hernando County Health Department Environmental Health Manager. "Department of Health laboratories provide testing services for physicians treating patients with clinical signs of mosquito-borne disease. Clinical

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signs may include fever, headache, fatigue, and body aches, occasionally with a skin rash (on the trunk of the body) and swollen lymph glands.” “There is no vaccine for the illness, so preventing exposure is key,” said Gray

DOH continues to conduct statewide surveillance for mosquito-borne illnesses, including WNV and Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis (EEE), St. Louis Encephalitis (SLE), Highlands J virus (HJV), malaria and dengue. Residents are encouraged to report dead birds via the web site <http://myfwc.com/bird/>.

For more information on mosquito-borne illnesses, visit DOH's Environmental Health Website at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/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 1-888-880-5782 or contact the Hernando County Health Department at 352-540-6800.

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