

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

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Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PROTECT YOURSELF FROM MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESSES

SANFORD- The Florida Department of Health in Seminole and Orange Counties would like to remind residents of the importance of personal protection against mosquito bites to prevent mosquito-borne illnesses. There is an increase in mosquito activity due to recent rain. Throughout the year, the health department works with Mosquito Control, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and state universities, to monitor for the presence of illnesses carried by mosquitoes.

"With all of the recent rains it is important to remember that standing water is a breeding ground for mosquitoes and can lead to an increase in the insects. There are simple measures that citizens can take to prevent mosquitoes from breeding such as draining standing water in or near homes," said Donna Walsh, Assistant Health Officer at the Department of Health in Seminole County.

Residents and visitors should remain diligent in protecting themselves from mosquito bites by practicing: **Drain and Cover.**

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.

- Wear shoes, socks, long pants and long-sleeves.
- Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing.
- Always use repellents according to the label. Repellents with DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus and IR3535 are effective.

COVER doors and windows with screens to keep mosquitoes out.

- Keep mosquitoes out of your house. Repair broken screens on windows, doors, porches, and patios.

Symptoms of mosquito-borne illnesses may include headache, fever, fatigue, dizziness, weakness, and confusion.

People over 50 are at higher risk for severe illness and more likely to develop serious symptoms of mosquito-borne illnesses like West Nile Virus (WNV) if they do get sick. Special care to avoid mosquito bites should be taken for those at risk of severe illness.

Physicians should contact their county health department if they suspect an individual may have a mosquito-borne illness. Department of Health (DOH) laboratories provide testing services for physicians treating patients with clinical signs of mosquito-borne illnesses.

For more information on mosquito-borne diseases visit DOH Environmental Health website at www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/arboviral/index.html.

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