

PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF EASTERN EQUINE ENCEPHALITIS

September 23, 2019 – Fall is almost here, but the summer weather and risk of mosquito-borne disease and illnesses hasn't quite left us yet.

Recently, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has confirmed four new cases and two additional deaths in Southwest Michigan due to Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE). To date this year, there have been eight reported EEE cases in humans of Barry, Berrien, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, and VanBuren counties while 21 cases have been reported in animals of Barry, Berrien, Calhoun, Cass, Genesee, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Lapeer, Montcalm, St. Joseph, and VanBuren counties.

Signs of EEE include the sudden onset of fever, chills, body and joint aches which can progress to a severe encephalitis, resulting in headache, disorientation, tremors, seizures and paralysis. Permanent brain damage, coma and death may also occur in some cases.

District Health Department #10 (DHD#10) is strongly encouraging residents to protect themselves against mosquito bites through the first hard frost by following the below precautions:

- Avoid mosquito prone times (dusk through dawn).
- Use Insect Repellent with one of the active ingredients below. When used as directed, EPA-registered insect repellents are proven safe and effective, even for children.
 - DEET
 - Picaridin
 - IR3535
 - Oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) or para menthane-diol (PMD)
 - 2-undecanone
- Treat clothes/uniforms with permethrin before wearing, as it will help repel mosquitos as well as ticks.
(see https://tickencounter.org/prevention/clothing_only_repellent_videos for how to's)
- Wear socks and shoes, light-colored long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt when outdoors.
- Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or other openings.
- Use bed nets when sleeping outdoors or in conditions with no window screens.
- Eliminate all sources of standing water that can support mosquito breeding around your home, including water in bird baths, abandoned swimming pools, wading pools, old tires and any other object holding water once a week.

For more information about EEE, visit www.mi.gov/eee.

For more information about mosquito-borne diseases, visit <https://www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases>

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