



MADISON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT of HEALTH

Working to build a healthy community

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NEWS Release

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Residents Urged to Wear Mosquito Repellent When Outdoors

Wampsville. In response to the recent tragic death of a child from the Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) virus in Oswego County, Madison County Health Department strongly encourages residents to actively take steps at home to prevent mosquito bites. This is particularly important in more swampy areas, like the Town of Sullivan, where mosquito populations have historically been found to carry the EEE virus. Mosquitoes carrying disease can be found across New York State, and Madison, Onondaga, Oneida, and Oswego Counties are considered high risk areas for EEE.

Mosquito bites should not be seen as harmless. Individuals can do things to avoid mosquito bites now and throughout the fall.

“As of August 15, 2011, Madison County mosquito trapping found no EEE carrying mosquitoes, but this may change as neighboring Oneida and Oswego Counties have both received reports of EEE this summer,” said Madison County Public Health Director Eric Faisst. “Reports of mosquitoes carrying the EEE virus tend to increase in late summer to mid-fall, making it especially important for residents to be mindful. Prevent mosquito bites now.”

Avoiding mosquito bites is the single best way to protect yourself and your family. Here are a few ways you can reduce the number of mosquitoes around your home or property:

- Throw out used tires, tin cans, pots, or other containers that water collects
- Make sure rain gutters drain well and clean clogged gutters
- Turn over plastic wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use
- Change bird bath water two times a week
- Drain water from pool covers

“Reducing areas with standing water around your home will help to lower the number of mosquito breeding sites, and is one of three steps you can take,” said Faisst.

A second way to stop mosquito bites is to prevent them from entering your home. Keep doors closed. Make sure window screens are in place to keep mosquitoes out!



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The third and most important step is to prevent mosquito bites in the first place. Summer brings people, especially children, outside and into contact with mosquitoes. Avoid areas where mosquitoes are present, especially at dawn and dusk when mosquito activity is greatest. When you are outside, use effective mosquito repellent and wear long pants and sleeves to avoid being the next victim of a mosquito bite. People are encouraged to use insect repellents containing DEET, picardin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus.

Insect repellents containing oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under 3. Products containing DEET should not be used on infants under two months. For children older than 2 months, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends products containing 10 percent to 30 percent DEET. Ten percent DEET provides protection for about 2 hours and 30 percent provides protection for about 5 hours. Choose the lowest concentration for the needed time of coverage. Always read and follow insect repellent label instructions.

What you can do at home is the key to preventing the spread of EEE in people. Aerial spraying, a commonly talked about way of reducing mosquito populations has shown limited effectiveness in many situations and is not necessarily a solution. Spraying will not stop the spread of EEE and has only a short-term effect of reducing mosquito populations. EEE is commonly detected again in areas shortly after spraying.

EEE is a viral disease spread by mosquitoes. EEE can affect people and horses. For the latest information about EEE, go to www.healthymadisoncounty.org.

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