



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) Activity in Kalamazoo County

Residents urged to protect against mosquito bites

KALAMAZOO, MI – Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services is reminding Kalamazoo County residents to protect themselves from mosquito bites following the confirmation of two cases of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and three (3) other possible cases in the county.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports that EEE is one of the most dangerous mosquito-borne diseases in the United States, with a 33 percent fatality rate in people who become ill and a 90 percent fatality rate in horses that become ill. People can become infected with the EEE virus from the bite of a mosquito carrying the virus. It cannot be transmitted person to person or horse to person or deer to person.

Early symptoms of EEE include the sudden onset of headache, high fever, chills, body and joint aches. Symptoms usually appear 4-10 days after exposure. EEE can develop into severe encephalitis (brain swelling), resulting in headache, disorientation, tremors, seizures and paralysis. Permanent brain damage, coma and death may also occur in some cases.

To date there are three (3) confirmed human cases in Michigan: two (2) in Kalamazoo County and one (1) in Berrien County. One of the confirmed individuals from Kalamazoo County has died. There are two (2) additional suspected human cases: one (1) in Kalamazoo County and one (1) in Berrien County. There are two (2) additional cases in Kalamazoo County under investigation.

“We strongly encourage residents to take precautions such as using insect repellent with DEET, wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors during the peak mosquito-biting hours which are dusk and dawn.” said James Rutherford, Health Officer of Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department.

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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The risk for contracting EEE throughout Kalamazoo County is considered widespread and all residents should take actions to prevent mosquito bites until the first hard frost of the year. The best way to prevent EEE or any other mosquito-borne illness is to reduce the number of mosquitoes around your home and to take personal precautions to avoid mosquito bites. **Avoid outdoor activities from dusk until dawn. If outdoor activities are necessary please take the following precautions:**

- Using EPA registered insect repellents with one of the following active ingredients: DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol, and 2-undecanone; follow the product label instructions and reapply as directed.
 - Don't use repellent on children under 2 months old. Instead dress your child in clothing that covers arms and legs and cover crib, stroller and baby carrier with mosquito netting.
- Wearing shoes and socks, light-colored long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt when outdoors.
- Making sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or other openings.
- Using bed nets when sleeping outdoors or in conditions with no window screens.
- Eliminating 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.
- Use nets and/or fans over outdoor eating areas

For more information, visit michigan.gov/eee or cdc.gov/eee

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Kalamazoo County Government
Health & Community Services Department

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