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IMPORTANCE OF REMEMBERING TO “DRAIN AND COVER”



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Lake County –The Florida Department of Health in Lake County (DOH-Lake) emphasizes the importance of protecting against mosquito-borne diseases. DOH-Lake works with partner agencies, including the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, mosquito control agencies, and state universities year-round to monitor for the presence of illnesses carried by mosquitoes including Zika, West Nile virus infections, Eastern Equine Encephalitis, St. Louis Encephalitis, Malaria, Dengue and Chikungunya.

“With all the rain we recently received from hurricane Matthew, we want to remind our residents that with rain comes mosquitoes” said Aaron Kissler, Administrator of the Florida Department of Health in Lake County. “After a storm it is important for everyone to act quickly in order to prevent mosquito breeding by practicing “Draining and Cover” whenever and wherever possible”

DOH-Lake advises the public to remain diligent in protecting themselves from mosquito bites by remembering to “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

- CLOTHING - Wear shoes, socks, and long pants and long-sleeves. This type of protection may be necessary for people who must work in areas where mosquitoes are present.
- REPELLENT - Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing.
 - Always use repellents according to the label. Repellents with DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide), picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and IR3535 are effective.
 - Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than 2 months old.

COVER doors and windows with screens to keep mosquitoes out of your house

- Repair broken screening on windows, doors, porches, and patios.

Tips on Repellent Use

- Always read label directions carefully for the approved usage before you apply a repellent. Some repellents are not suitable for children.
- Products with concentrations of up to 30 percent DEET are generally recommended. Other US Environmental Protection Agency-approved repellents contain picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535. These products are generally available at local pharmacies. Look for active ingredients to be listed on the product label.
- Apply insect repellent to exposed skin, or onto clothing, but not under clothing.
- In protecting children, read label instructions to be sure the repellent is age-appropriate. According to the CDC, mosquito repellents containing oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under the age of three years. DEET is not recommended on children younger than two months old.
- Avoid applying repellents to the hands of children. Adults should apply repellent first to their own hands and then transfer it to the child's skin and clothing.
- If additional protection is necessary, apply a permethrin repellent directly to your clothing. Again, always follow the manufacturer's directions.

Most people who become sick from a mosquito virus infection have mild symptoms like headache, fever, dizziness and fatigue, but more severe symptoms are possible. DOH-Lake urges anyone with symptoms to consult their primary care physician or seek immediate medical care. Physicians should contact their county health department if they suspect an individual may have a mosquito-borne illness. The Department of Health provides testing services for physicians treating patients with clinical signs of mosquito-borne disease.

The mission of the Department of Health is to promote, protect and improve the health of all people in Florida. For more information on mosquito-borne illnesses, visit DOH's Environmental Health Web site at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/mosquito-borne-diseases/index.html> or call your local county health department.

Monitoring wild bird deaths can help officials track the spread of some mosquito-borne diseases. Anyone who discovers a dead bird is encouraged to report it on the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's website at www.MyFWC.com/bird/.

If anyone is experiencing a high level of annoyance from biting mosquitoes please contact the Lake County Mosquito and Aquatic Plant Management Program at 352-343-9419 for tips and service on how to reduce mosquitoes around your home.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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