



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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NEWS RELEASE
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Residents Reminded to Take Mosquito Bite Prevention in Kalamazoo County

KALAMAZOO, MI — As warm summer days continue, Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department wants to remind residents to take precautions for themselves and outdoor animals against mosquito bites between dusk and dawn.

Michigan is known to harbor mosquitoes that can carry diseases such as the West Nile virus (WNV), Jamestown Canyon virus, and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE). As reported by the Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development recently, EEE was detected in a horse in Clare County. Currently, there is one human case of Jamestown Canyon in Kalamazoo County.

“In 2019, Michigan had one of its largest outbreaks of EEE in recent history. EEE is a rare but one of the most dangerous mosquito-borne diseases. It has a 33% fatality rate in humans and 90% fatality rate in horses,” says Environmental Health Division Chief Vern Johnson. “It only takes one bite from an infected mosquito to transmit a virus.”

For WNV, Jamestown Canyon, or EEE in humans, symptoms can include the sudden onset of fever, chills, body and joint aches. In some cases, infection can develop into severe encephalitis, with symptoms including high fever, headache, disorientation, vomiting, tremors, seizures, convulsions, and paralysis. For EEE especially, permanent brain damage, coma, and death may also occur in some cases. EEE is not spread from horse-to-horse or horse-to-human contact and takes four to ten days after the bite of an infected mosquito to develop symptoms.

Residents can stay healthy by following steps to avoid mosquito bites:

- Apply insect repellents that contain the active ingredient DEET, or other U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-approved product to exposed skin or clothing, and always follow the manufacturer’s directions for use.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors. Apply insect repellent to clothing to help prevent bites.
- Maintain window and door screening to help keep mosquitoes outside.

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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- Empty water from mosquito breeding sites around the home, such as buckets, unused kiddie pools, old tires or similar sites where mosquitoes may lay eggs.
- Use nets or fans over outdoor eating areas.

“Mosquito-borne illnesses will continue to be a risk in Michigan until late fall when nighttime temperatures consistently fall below freezing,” said Johnson.

More information about **WNV** can be found at:

- https://www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases/0,4579,7-186-76711_76752---,00.html
- <https://www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html>

More information about **Jamestown Canyon** can be found at:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/jamestown-canyon/index.html>

More information about **EEE** can be found at:

- https://www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases/0,4579,7-186-76711_77442---,00.html
- <https://www.cdc.gov/easternequineencephalitis/tech/epi.html>

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