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## Health Issue Mosquito-Borne Illnesses Advisory

**Contact:**

Christina Louv

[Christina.louv-pickle@flhealth.gov](mailto:Christina.louv-pickle@flhealth.gov)

727-619-0163



**Pasco County, Fla.**—The Florida Department of Health in Pasco County (DOH-Pasco) advises residents there has been an increase in mosquito-borne disease activity in areas of Pasco County.

Eastern equine encephalitis virus was detected in a group of sick emus. The risk of transmission to humans has increased. Pasco County Mosquito Control and DOH-Pasco continue surveillance and prevention efforts.

DOH-Pasco reminds residents and visitors to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes and to take basic precautions to help limit exposure.

To protect yourself from mosquitoes, you should remember to **“Drain and Cover”**:

### **DRAIN standing water to stop mosquitoes from multiplying.**

- Drain water from garbage cans, house gutters, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flowerpots, or any other containers where sprinkler or rainwater 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, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-menthane-diol, 2-undecanone and IR3535 are effective.
  - Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than 2 months old.

### **Tips on Repellent Use**

- Always read label directions carefully for the approved usage before you apply a repellent.
- Apply insect repellent to exposed skin or clothing, but not under clothing.
- Treat clothing and gear with products containing 0.5% permethrin. **Do not** apply permethrin directly to skin.

- Some repellents are not suitable for children. Ensure repellent is safe for children and age appropriate:
  - Mosquito repellents containing lemon eucalyptus oil or para-menthane-diol **should not** be used on children under the age of 3 years.
  - DEET **is not recommended** on children younger than 2 months old.
  - Avoid applying repellents to the hands of children.
  - Parents should apply repellent to their hands first and then transfer it to the child's skin and clothing.

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

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

For more information on what repellent is right for you, consider using the [Environmental Protection Agency's search tool](#) to help you choose skin-applied repellent products.

The Department continues to conduct statewide surveillance for mosquito-borne illnesses, including West Nile virus infections, Eastern equine encephalitis, St. Louis encephalitis, malaria, chikungunya, and dengue. Residents of Florida are encouraged to report dead birds to the [Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's site](#).

For more information, visit the [Department's website](#) or contact DOH-Pasco at 727-619-0300.

### **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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### **About Pasco County Mosquito Control District**

The mission of the Pasco Mosquito Control District is to protect the health and well-being of the citizens of Pasco County through the prevention and control of mosquitoes and mosquito-borne diseases. Our goal is to control both pestiferous and disease carrying mosquito populations to a tolerable level in the safest, most economical manner, while using a variety of methods in such a way as to minimize potential effects on people, wildlife, and the environment.

For more information, please visit our website at [pascomosquito.org](#)

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### **Contact:**

Maria Johnson  
Community Engagement Director  
[mjohnson@pascomosquito.org](mailto:mjohnson@pascomosquito.org)  
727-376-4568