

EpiCenter

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BULLETIN: WEST NILE VIRUS

The weekly monitoring of sentinel chickens has confirmed the presence of West Nile Virus in the Pahokee and Belle Glade areas of Palm Beach County.

Evidence that the disease, carried by mosquitoes, is now present in Palm Beach County coupled with four recent confirmed human cases in the Miami area, has prompted this update.

We are urging all residents to avoid mosquito  bites. Please educate others to:

-  Avoid outdoor activities when mosquitoes are most active (normally at dusk and dawn).
-  If you must be outdoors when mosquitoes are active, cover up by wearing shoes, socks, long pants and long-sleeved shirts.
-  Use mosquito repellent containing DEET according to the manufacturer's label directions.
-  Eliminate stagnant water in birdbaths, ponds and other receptacles in which mosquitoes might breed.
-  Be sure doors and window screens are tight fitting and in good repair.

On the back of this newsletter is information on West Nile Virus laboratory testing. If you suspect a case of West Nile Virus illness, please call the Division of Epidemiology and Disease Control, Palm Beach County Health Department, Monday-Friday 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM at (561) 840-4564; after 5:00 PM or on weekends, please call (561) 840-4500.

Infection Control Practitioners: Please give a copy of this letter and information to all physicians who have privileges at your hospital.

Thank you for your continued support in caring for and protecting our community!

Physicians are Encouraged to Test for and Required to Report Suspect or Confirmed Mosquito-Borne Diseases

(For additional information go to: http://www.doh.state.fl.us/disease_ctrl/epi/htopics/arbo/3.htm)

Health care providers and laboratories are required to report all suspect or confirmed cases of arbovirus encephalitis and malaria to their county health departments. **Identification of human cases of mosquito-borne disease may lead to the issuance of health alerts and/or mosquito abatement activities.**

As a service to health care providers, the FL Department of Health Laboratory offers arbovirus (e.g., SLE, EEE, dengue and WN) and malaria testing for patients with clinical manifestations. When possible, CSF and sera should be tested simultaneously. Acute sera will be tested for selective arboviral antibodies using HAI, and seropositive samples retested using ELISA IgM. An additional serum sample drawn 3-4 weeks later may be required for confirmation. A laboratory submission form must accompany specimens (may be obtained from PBCHD Epi (561) 840-4566). For additional information, please contact the DOH Tampa Branch Laboratory at (813) 974-5990 or the DOH Jacksonville Central Laboratory at (904) 791-1540 for arbovirus testing, and the Miami Lab at (305) 324-2432 for malaria testing.

Test	Specimen Required	Special Preparation and Container	Result Indicator
Arbovirus Isolation	Contact Tampa Branch Laboratory for Instructions	Contact Tampa Branch Laboratory for Instructions	See individual report
EEE, SLE, dengue, WN	CSF	CSF frozen, or with cold pack. <u>Test available at Jacksonville & Tampa Branch Laboratories</u>	Positive or Negative
EEE, SLE, dengue, WN (total antibodies)	Single or paired sera (HAI and ELISA IgM for acute serum. Convalescent serum sample may be required.)	Red top or serum separation tube. <u>Test available at Jacksonville & Tampa Branch Laboratories</u>	Titer and interpretation or no antibody detected
Western equine encephalitis, Venezuelan equine encephalitis, La Crosse, Yellow Fever (total antibodies)	Single or paired sera. Travel and exposure history must be submitted with specimen.	Red top or serum separation tube <u>Jacksonville Laboratory only</u>	Titer and interpretation or no antibody detected

Arboviral encephalitis: Arboviral infection from eastern equine encephalitis virus, St. Louis encephalitis virus, Western equine encephalitis virus or West Nile virus may result in febrile illness of variable severity associated with neurologic symptoms ranging from headache to aseptic meningitis or encephalitis. Symptoms include headache, confusion or other alteration in sensorium, nausea and vomiting. Signs may include fever, meningismus, cranial nerve palsies, paresis or paralysis, sensory deficits, altered reflexes, convulsions, abnormal movements and coma of varying degree.

To report suspect or confirmed cases to Palm Beach County Health Department Division of Epidemiology and Disease Control, call (561) 840-4564 or 840-4500 on weekends/evenings.