



Equine Encephalitis (EEE) Virus Identified in Mosquitoes

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Acton

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) announced today that EEE virus was detected in mosquitoes collected from Acton, Massachusetts. In 2011, 4,604 mosquito samples were tested for EEE virus, and 80 positive samples were identified in Massachusetts. Acton had no EEE virus positive mosquito samples identified in 2011.

EEE is a rare but serious illness spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. While EEE can infect people of all ages, people under 15 years of age or over 50 years of age are at greatest risk for serious illness.

By taking a few, common-sense precautions, people can help to protect themselves and their loved ones:

Avoid Mosquito Bites

- **Be Aware of Peak Mosquito Hours** - The hours from dusk to dawn are peak biting times for many mosquitoes. Consider rescheduling outdoor activities that occur during evening or early morning. If you are outdoors at any time and notice mosquitoes around you, take steps to avoid being bitten by moving indoors, covering up and/or wearing repellent.
- **Clothing Can Help** reduce mosquito bites. Although it may be difficult to do when it's hot, wearing long-sleeves, long pants and socks when outdoors will help keep mosquitoes away from your skin.
- **Apply Insect Repellent** when you go outdoors. Use a repellent with **DEET** (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide), **permethrin**, **picaridin** (KBR 3023), **IR3535** or **oil of lemon eucalyptus** [p-methane 3, 8-diol (PMD)] according to the instructions on the product label. DEET products should not be used on infants under two months of age and should be used in concentrations of 30% or less on older children. Oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under three years of age. Permethrin products are intended for use on items such as clothing, shoes, bed nets and camping gear and should not be applied to skin.

Mosquito-Proof Your Home

- **Drain Standing Water** – Many mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Limit the number of places around your home for mosquitoes to breed by either draining or getting rid of items that hold water. Check rain gutters and drains. Empty any unused flowerpots and wading pools, and change water in birdbaths frequently.
- **Install or Repair Screens** - Some mosquitoes like to come indoors. Keep them outside by having tightly-fitting screens on all of your windows and doors.

While the Acton Health Department continues to work closely with the MDPH and other agencies, locally we are also actively working with the Central Mass Mosquito Control Project to provide an appropriate mosquito control response in the area where the positive finding of EEE was found. Fact sheets on EEE can be found on the Town's website at <http://www.acton-ma.gov/>.

Information about EEE and reports of current and historical EEE virus activity in Massachusetts can be found on the MDPH website at <http://www.mass.gov/dph/wmv>.