

Western Tidewater Health District

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Public Health Bulletin

August 10th, 2009

SUBJECT:	Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE)
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For Immediate Release (Suffolk, VA)

The Western Tidewater Health District received confirmation of positive tests for Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) in two horses located off of Route 13 in southern Suffolk. The city has experienced increased EEE activity this year with seven positive sentinel chickens and fifty positive mosquito pools. The city of Suffolk last had reported cases in 2007 when two horses tested positive for EEE.

Although EEE rarely affects people, it can be more deadly than West Nile Virus. EEE may kill up to 35 percent of people who develop encephalitis, compared with up to 15 percent for West Nile Virus. The symptoms of the disease in human beings range from flu-like illness (headache, fever, loss of appetite, aching muscles, and tiredness) to encephalitis, coma and death. There is no preventive vaccine for humans but there is for horses. Almost all unvaccinated horses that contract EEE die. Horse owners are reminded to be sure their horses' vaccinations are up-to-date.

THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP PROTECT YOURSELF:

- 1) Use mosquito repellent. (Three active ingredients, for application directly to human skin, are recommended for use as repellents: DEET, picaridin, and oil of lemon eucalyptus. Use products containing no greater than 30% DEET on children. For adults, higher concentrations of DEET (up to 50%) give the longest period of protection. For additional information, please see the following websites: <http://www.vdh.state.va.us/epidemiology/DEE/Vectorborne/factsheets/eee.htm> or http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/qa/insect_repellent.htm)
- 2) Wear long sleeves and pants.
- 3) Avoid the outdoors from dusk to dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- 4) Eliminate standing water outside where mosquitoes can breed; empty containers; bag empty bottles and cans; clean gutters and bird baths; remove discarded appliances; cover boats so they do not hold water; remove old automobile tires; and trim vegetation that provides mosquito hiding places.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Western Tidewater Health District at (757) 514-4767.