



JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

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Eastern Equine Encephalitis Reported in a Horse in Town of Alexandria

Watertown, NY – The Jefferson County Public Health Service (JCPHS) has been notified by the New York State Department of Health that a horse in the Town of Alexandria is positive for Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE). This is the second horse reported to have EEE in Jefferson County this year. The first reported horse with EEE was just one week ago and was also located in the Town of Alexandria. One horse was not vaccinated against EEE and the other was not up to date on its EEE vaccination.

EEE is an extremely rare, but serious and often fatal infection. EEE is transmitted to humans and horses through the bite of an infected mosquito. People over the age of 50 and people younger than the age of 15 are at greatest risk for developing severe disease when infected with EEE. From 1971 through 2024, 12 people have been diagnosed with EEE; 7 of those people died. Prior to this year, the last reported cases of EEE were in 2015.

Mosquitoes are most active between dusk and dawn. Protection measures include wearing shoes and socks, long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt when outside for a long period. Applying a mosquito repellent containing DEET, Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, or IR3535 is also recommended to prevent mosquito bites. Do not put the repellent directly onto children. Put it on your hands and apply it to your child. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for application. Repair screens in your home.

Preventing mosquito bites is important to reduce your risk of mosquito-borne diseases. Take the following steps to protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites:

- Cover your skin with clothing (long sleeves and pants) when outdoors when mosquitoes are active
- Apply an EPA-registered insect repellent to exposed skin
- Make sure screens in your windows and doors are intact
- Get rid of standing water around your home where mosquitoes breed

Horse owners should talk with their veterinarian about vaccinations against mosquito-borne infections. For more information on mosquito-borne disease, please visit www.jcphs.org.

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