



St. Lawrence County Public Health Department

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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Horse identified with Eastern Equine Encephalitis in St. Lawrence County

Canton, NY — The St. Lawrence County Public Health Department has been notified that a horse in the Morristown area (Brier Hill) has tested positive for Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE, Triple E) virus. The EEE virus is transmitted by mosquitoes and can infect people, horses and other mammals, some birds, reptiles and amphibians. This very rare, but serious, virus can cause inflammation of the brain, also known as encephalitis.

About 5-10 EEE human cases are reported each year in the U.S. In New York State, there have been 8 human disease cases between 2003-2022. These cases occurred in Oswego and Onondaga counties.

EEE can cause various symptoms, such as fever, headache, vomiting, diarrhea, seizures, behavioral changes, drowsiness, or coma. If you're under 15 or over 50, you're more likely to develop a severe form of EEE. The best way to prevent EEE is to protect yourself from mosquito bites. The risk of getting EEE is highest from late July through September, and there are no medications to prevent or treat EEE virus infections in humans. If you are a horse owner, consult your veterinarian about vaccination against EEE.

To avoid mosquito breeding near your property, the St. Lawrence County Public Health Department advises taking the following measures. Make sure your roof gutters drain correctly and clean clogged gutters in the spring and fall. Remove or turn over any items that may hold stagnant water, such as tires, buckets, planters, toys, pools, birdbaths, flowerpots, or trash containers to prevent mosquitoes from breeding. Clear vegetation and waste from the edge of ponds.

To avoid mosquito bites, take precautions during their peak activity hours from dusk until dawn. Wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, socks, and shoes. Use mosquito repellent containing DEET, Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, or IR3535. Do not apply repellent directly to children; instead, apply it to your own hands and then rub it onto your child. Avoid applying to your face and wash your skin and clothing thoroughly after coming indoors.

For more information on EEE, please call the St. Lawrence County Public Health Department at 315-386-2325 or visit:

New York State Department of Health's website:

https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/eastern_equine_encephalitis/fact_sheet.htm



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Center for Disease Control website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/eas/enecephalitis/index.html#:~:text=EEE%20virus%20is%20a%20rare,survivors%20have%20ongoing%20neurologic%20problems.>

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