



MORROW COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT
Pamela Butler, MPH Health Commissioner
619 W. Marion Rd., Suite B, Rm. 143
Mt. Gilead, OH 43338
Phone: (419) 947-1545
Fax: (419) 946-6807
Email: mchdpip@morrowcountyhealth.org
Online: www.morrowcountyhealth.org

News Release – For Immediate Release

For more information, please contact

Stephanie Bragg, RN BSN

Assistant Health Commissioner / Director of Nursing

Stephanie.bragg@morrowcountyhealth.org | (419) 947-1545 x318

La Crosse Virus in Morrow County

Morrow County Health District is seeing La Crosse virus within the county this year, with one confirmed case of the illness and another possible case. Since 2011, there have been 7 reported cases of La Crosse in Morrow County, including the two cases this year. This marks the first time a case of the illness has been reported within the county since September 2015.

What is La Crosse Virus Disease?

It is a rare illness in people that is caused by a virus spread from mosquitos. There are an average of 20 cases of the disease reported in Ohio every year. Most cases are seen between July and October.

How the Virus is Spread

La Crosse virus is passed to people from the bite of a mosquito. The mosquito that spreads the virus is *Aedes triseriatus*, also known as the “treehole mosquito”. This type of mosquito is aggressive and bites during the daytime. Treehole mosquitos do not breed in stagnant pools of water on the ground, in ponds, or streams. They exclusively breed in containers of water including: cavities in trees (tree holes), old tires, tin cans, bottles, and other man-made items that hold water for more than a week.

Symptoms of the Disease

Often the people who are infected with the virus do not show any symptoms of being sick. When people do become ill from La Crosse, symptoms can include: fever, tiredness, headache, nausea, and vomiting. Sometimes, the virus can affect the nervous system in people, causing them to become very sick. These severe cases of La Crosse disease can cause meningitis, inflammation in the brain, seizures, coma, and paralysis. Although the disease can occur in adults, it is rare. Instead, the average age of those who become sick from La Crosse is 8 years old, with most of the severe cases affecting children who are under the age of 16.

How to Prevent the Disease

The best way to prevent La Crosse virus disease is to prevent mosquito bites and prevent the mosquitos from breeding near your home. Prevention tips include:

- Use an EPA-approved insect repellent on bare skin, even during the day as these mosquitoes will bite during daytime hours
- Wear long sleeves, pants, and socks if possible
- Wear clothing that is treated with permethrin to repel and kill mosquitoes
- Use screens in doors and windows to prevent mosquitoes from entering your home
- Make sure that water doesn't collect in containers around your house
 - Empty water from flower pots, tires, buckets, and barrels
 - Change water in pet dishes and replace water in bird baths at least every week
 - Drill holes in tire swings so water can drain
 - Empty wading pools and store on their sides when not in use

For more information, please call the Morrow County Health District at 419-947-1545.

References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018). La Crosse encephalitis. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/lac/>

Ohio Department of Health. (2018). La Crosse virus disease. *Infectious Disease Control Manual*. Retrieved from: <https://www.odh.ohio.gov/pdf/IDCM/lac.pdf>

xxx