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TAKE PRECAUTIONS AGAINST MOSQUITOES

Rainy season begins June 1, giving mosquitoes plenty of places to multiply

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Ocala, Fla.—The Florida Department of Health in Marion County is urging residents to protect themselves against mosquito-borne illnesses as the Florida rainy season gets underway.

“Although Zika is a serious illness that is getting a lot of attention, we should all take precautions to protect ourselves from the diseases mosquitoes can carry,” said Florida Department of Health in Marion County Health Officer Erin Hess. “Cover yourself to keep mosquitoes from biting, and drain water from around your home to stop mosquitoes from breeding.”

The department is running educational videos in Marion County movie theaters, and has billboards posted around the county to help get the “drain and cover” message out.

Drain standing water to stop mosquitoes from multiplying. Drain water from garbage cans, house gutters, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flower pots or any other containers where sprinkler or rain water has collected. Discard old tires and other items that aren't being used. Empty and clean birdbaths and pet's water bowls at least once or twice a week. Protect boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that don't accumulate water. Maintain swimming pools in good condition and appropriately chlorinated. Empty plastic swimming pools when not in use.

Cover skin with clothing or repellent. Wear shoes, socks, and long pants and long-sleeves. Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing. Always use repellents according to the label. Repellents with DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and IR3535 are effective. Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than 2 months old. Cover doors and windows with screens to keep mosquitoes out of your house.

For more information on mosquito bite prevention, visit FloridaHealth.gov.

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