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**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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# N E W S

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## **Fight the Bite**

### Mosquito bites can cause illness

**LIMA** – The Allen County Health Department has received two (2) reports of suspected cases of La Crosse encephalitis (also known as California encephalitis). Both cases were reported in children, and both are recovering at home. La Crosse encephalitis is transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito.

“This is a good reminder for all of us to ‘fight the bite’ and protect ourselves from mosquito-borne diseases, especially this time of year,” says David L. Rosebrock, Health Commissioner. “Mosquitoes can transmit diseases from infected birds or mammals to humans and these diseases can make some people very sick.” The four diseases people can get from mosquitoes in Ohio include La Crosse encephalitis, St. Louis encephalitis, Eastern equine encephalitis and West Nile virus.

While most people infected with mosquito-borne viruses show no symptoms, some people have a mild fever, headache and muscle aches that will last up to a week. A small number of infected people will develop severe illness requiring hospitalization. Symptoms of more severe illness are body aches, fever, confusion, weakness, stiff neck, tremors and convulsions. People over 50, children under the age of 16, and people with existing health problems are at greatest risk for developing severe illnesses from infected mosquitoes.

The most important steps to protect yourself are to avoid being bitten and to eliminate mosquito breeding grounds.

**To avoid being bitten by mosquitoes:** Avoid outdoor activities between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active; if you must be outdoors, be sure to wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts, shoes and socks. Light colors are least attractive to mosquitoes. Use insect repellent and follow the label directions.

**To eliminate mosquito breeding sites near your home:** Remove all discarded tires and other water-holding containers, such as tin cans and unused flower pots, from your property. Eliminate standing water from your property. Make sure all roof gutters are clean and properly draining. Clean and chlorinate pools, outdoor saunas and hot tubs. Keep them empty when not in use and drain water from pool covers. Change water in bird baths weekly.

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Please contact Deb Roberts at 419-228-4457 for additional information.