



# Jackson County Health Department

1715 Lansing Avenue • Jackson, MI 49202 • Phone (517) 788-4420 • Fax (517) 788-4373



*Creating Healthy Communities*

Contact: **Rashmi Travis**

Phone Number: **517-768-1658**

Email Address: **rtravis@mijackson.org**

Date: September 14, 2020

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### *EEE confirmed in Jackson County Horse*

**JACKSON COUNTY, MI-** The Jackson County Health Department (JCHD) has received information from the State departments of MDHHS and MDARD that a horse has tested positive for Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE). This is the 19<sup>th</sup> EEE positive horse in Michigan to date. At the time of this publication, there are no human cases of EEE in Jackson County or the State.

JCHD is taking this single confirmed positive EEE horse case very seriously by providing the public and local officials with additional information as it becomes available. Today's press release by JCHD follows yesterday's MDHHS press release concerning the other 18 positive horse cases that have occurred across Michigan, mostly in the mid-Michigan area between Grand Rapids and Clare.

This Jackson County horse was located between Grass Lake and Michigan Center, the general geographic area where the county's 2019 EEE cases also occurred.

"At this time and with an abundance of caution, JCHD recommends that everyone limit their outdoor events and activities that occur during dusk to dawn and take other precautions, such as the use of repellent sprays and long sleeve shirts and pants. The dusk to dawn hours are the prime hours when the mosquitos responsible for the transmission of EEE generally come out." says Rashmi Travis, Jackson County Health Department Health Officer. "These precautionary measures should continue until the first hard frost decreases the mosquito population."

-MORE-

---

Working together to create and promote a healthy community through  
disease prevention and control,  
health education, environmental protection and emergency preparedness.

JCHD strongly advises the following actions be taken:

- Use EPA-registered insect repellants that include DEET or another EPA-approved product.
- Wear socks with shoes, light-colored long pants, and long-sleeved shirts.
- Dump all standing water around homes and buildings.
- Ensure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens with tears or gaps.
- Use nets and/or fans over outdoor eating areas.
- Use bed nets for those sleeping outdoors or in conditions with no window screens.
- Share these messages on your social media platforms to increase awareness about preventative measures to take.

EEE is a rare, deadly virus that is transmitted to horses, deer and humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. The two mosquito species that carry it are most active from dusk until dawn (7:00 pm to 7:00 am). When possible, residents should avoid outdoor activities during this time.

Persons under age 15 and over 50 are at greatest risk of severe disease following infection and should take extra measures to ensure they are not bitten by mosquitoes.

EEE is one of the most dangerous mosquito-borne diseases in the United States, with a 33 percent fatality rate in people who become ill and a 90 percent fatality rate in horses that become ill. Signs of EEE include the sudden onset of fever, chills, body and joint aches. EEE can develop into severe encephalitis, resulting in headache, disorientation, tremors, seizures and paralysis. Permanent brain damage, coma and death may also occur in some cases. If you develop any of these signs seek medical attention immediately.

Michigan is beginning to experience widespread animal activity of EEE, mostly in the Mid-Michigan area between Grand Rapids and Clare. With Jackson County's case today, Michigan has had 19 confirmed horse cases to date.

Actions for horse owners to take:

- Talk to your veterinarian about vaccinating against EEE

-MORE-

- Placing livestock in a barn under fans during peak mosquito activity time (dusk to dawn)
- Using an approved insect repellent for the species of animal
- Eliminating standing water on your property to the extent possible (puddles, buckets, etc.)
- Immediately contact your veterinarian if an animal shows signs of illness such as fever, stumbling, struggling to stand

For more information about mosquito-borne diseases visit [Michigan.gov/EmergingDiseases](https://Michigan.gov/EmergingDiseases)

###