

MEDIA RELEASE

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



Public Health
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Aug. 9, 2023

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Erie County Mosquitoes Test Positive for Viruses

Erie, PA — The Erie County Department of Health confirms that a mosquito sample collected in Harborcreek Township on August 1, 2023 has tested positive for West Nile virus. This is the fifth mosquito sample to test positive in Erie County in 2023. Additionally, a mosquito sample collected in Millcreek Township on July 27, 2023 has tested positive for Jamestown Canyon virus (JCV). This is the first sample to test positive for this virus in Erie County since routine testing was expanded in 2023.

At this time no human cases of either virus have been reported in Erie County. Additional monitoring will be done in the area where these mosquito samples were collected. Appropriate control work will be conducted, depending on the number and types of mosquitoes that are found.

Both West Nile virus and Jamestown Canyon virus are spread to people by infected mosquitoes. Most people do not develop symptoms while some will have fever, headache and fatigue. These viruses can cause severe disease, including encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). Reduce the risk of infection by preventing mosquito bites. If you think you or a family member might be infected, talk with your healthcare provider.

Mosquitoes that can spread Jamestown Canyon Virus are attracted to floodwater and low-lying areas that retain water after storm events. The detection of Jamestown Canyon Virus in Erie County does not indicate an immediate or widespread threat to the public, but is a result of additional testing capacities as a part of the statewide Mosquito Disease Control program.

Prevent mosquito bites with the following tips:

- Insect repellants with DEET can be applied as directed to exposed skin and thin clothing.
- Stay indoors at dawn, dusk and early evening when mosquitoes are most active. If you must go outdoors, wear a long-sleeved shirt and long pants.
- Use the proper type of lighting outside. Incandescent lights attract mosquitoes, while florescent lights neither attract nor repel mosquitoes.
- Make sure window and door screens are “bug tight.”
- Mosquitoes are repelled by high winds, so electric fans may provide some relief at outdoor events.

Reduce the number of mosquitoes around homes and neighborhoods by getting rid of standing water, where mosquitoes lay their eggs.

- Dispose of any refuse that can hold water—such as tin cans, containers and used tires.
- Products such as “mosquito dunks” can be obtained from garden centers.
- Drill holes in the bottoms of recycling containers and check uncovered junk piles.
- Clean clogged roof gutters every year. Check storm drains, leaky faucets and window wells.
- Empty accumulated water from wheelbarrows, boats, cargo trailers, toys and ceramic pots. If possible, turn them over when not using them.
- Do not allow water to stagnate in birdbaths, ornamental pools, water gardens and swimming

More information is available at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) or [dep.pa.gov](https://www.dep.pa.gov).

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