



HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

Administration

830 Scenic Drive
P.O. Box 3271
Modesto, CA 95353
Phone: (209) 558-7163
Fax: (209)558-7123
www.hsahealth.org

NUMBER: 17-21
FOR RELEASE: Immediate

DATE: December 6, 2017
CONTACT: Anuj Bhatia
Phone: (209) 558-6833

**FIRST HUMAN CASE OF SAINT LOUIS ENCEPHALITIS VIRUS
DETECTED IN STANISLAUS COUNTY**

MODESTO, CA (December 6, 2017) – A male in his 70’s is the first confirmed human St. Louis encephalitis virus (SLEV) infection in Stanislaus County for 2017, announced Dr. Julie Vaishampayan, Stanislaus County Public Health Officer. “He had symptoms and was tested in September; confirmatory testing was performed first by the California Department of Public Health followed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.” This is the second person in California testing positive for the virus in 2017

The virus was identified in mosquitoes in Stanislaus County in August of this year, the first detection in over four decades. To date in 2017, SLEV has been detected in mosquitoes in 14 California counties.

SLEV is transmitted to humans by the bite of an infected mosquito. Most people infected with SLEV have no apparent illness. Initial symptoms of those who become ill may include fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, and tiredness. Severe neuroinvasive disease (often involving encephalitis, an inflammation of the brain) occurs more commonly in older adults. Like West Nile virus, there is no vaccine or specific treatment for SLEV infection.

While mosquito activity has dramatically decreased due to colder temperatures, Stanislaus County residents can still protect themselves and their families by following these simple steps:

DEET – Apply insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR 3535 according to label instructions to keep mosquitoes from biting you. Apply repellents only to exposed skin and/or clothing. DEET can be used safely on infants and children two months of age and older. Permethrin is a repellent/insecticide that can be applied to clothing and will provide excellent protection through multiple washes. You can treat clothing yourself (always follow the directions on the package) or purchase pre-treated clothing. For best protection it is still necessary to apply other repellent to exposed skin.

DAWN AND DUSK – Mosquitoes that carry SLEV and West Nile virus tend to bite in the early morning and evening so it is important to wear repellent at this time. Make sure that your doors and windows have tight-fitting screens to keep mosquitoes outside. Repair or replace screens with tears or holes.

DRESS – Wear clothing that reduces the risk of skin exposure to mosquito bites (i.e., socks, long pants and long-sleeved shirts).

-MORE-

-CONTINUED-

DRAIN – Mosquitoes lay their eggs on standing water. Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property, including flower pots, old car tires, rain gutters and pet bowls. If you have a pond, use mosquito fish or commercially available products to eliminate mosquito larvae. Change the water in pet dishes and replace the water in bird baths weekly. Drill holes in tire swings so water drains out. Empty children’s wading pools and store on their side after use. Neglected swimming pools are also prime areas for mosquito breeding. The East Side and Turlock Mosquito Abatement Districts are available to help with neglected pools in the prevention of mosquito development. To request District service:

- East Side, call 209-522-4098 or visit the website at www.eastsidemosquito.com
- Turlock, call 209-634-1234 or visit the website at www.turlockmosquito.org.

Resources for Additional Information on SLEV are:

- California Department of Public Health SLE website, <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/SLE.aspx>.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/sle/index.html>

###