



Knox County Health Department

140 Dameron Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37917

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Contact: Kelsey Wilson
865-257-7460 cell

Increase in mosquito-borne virus affecting children in Knox County

Knox County, Tenn. – Six cases of La Crosse virus have been reported within the past nine weeks, all of which have required hospitalization. This is the highest number of cases reported in Knox County since 2020 and the mosquito season is still ongoing. All current cases are among children under age 12.

La Crosse virus is a mosquito-borne infection that does not cause symptoms in most people. If symptoms develop, they can include fever, headache, nausea, and vomiting. Rarely, people may develop severe disease, including encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). Severe disease occurs most often in children under 16 years old. Most severe cases require hospitalization but will recover with supportive care. However, up to 15% of cases can have major neurologic complications.

The best way to avoid a La Crosse infection is to prevent or reduce mosquito bites. La Crosse is spread by the bite of an *Aedes* mosquito, which bites primarily during dawn and dusk in wooded areas. People should also:

- Use insect repellents.
 - Treat clothing with repellents such as permethrin.
- Wear long-sleeve shirts and pants if working in grassy areas and cover strollers/baby carriers with mosquito netting.
- Control the mosquito population in your yard by reducing standing water on the property.
 - Once a week, turn over items that hold water, such as swings, buckets, toys, and flowerpot saucers.

If you notice any new neurological issue in your child, seek emergency care. For any other concerns, contact your child's pediatrician.

About Knox County Health Department

The first health department in Tennessee to achieve national voluntary accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is dedicated to ensuring the conditions in which every resident can be healthy. For more information, visit www.knoxcounty.org/health.

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