



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Jamestown Canyon Virus Found During Kent County Mosquito Surveillance

GRAND RAPIDS, MI. (August 6, 2021) –The Jamestown Canyon virus has been detected in tested mosquitoes in Kent County. This finding is not a human case. The discovery was made during ongoing surveillance and testing conducted by the Kent County Health Department (KCHD) in the 49504 ZIP code. This is the first time the Jamestown Canyon Virus has been detected in Kent County.

Jamestown Canyon virus is spread to people by infected mosquitoes. While the virus has been detected throughout much of the United States, most cases to date have occurred in the upper Midwest. Fever, headache, and fatigue are common symptoms with the Jamestown Canyon virus disease. Jamestown Canyon virus can rarely cause severe disease, including infection of the brain (encephalitis) or the lining around the brain (meningitis). There are no vaccines to prevent or medicines to treat Jamestown Canyon virus infection. Reduce your risk of infection by avoiding mosquito bites.

“Fortunately, the measures that people can take to protect themselves from other mosquito borne illnesses like West Nile Virus will work,” says Paul Bellamy, Public Health Epidemiologist at KCHD. “This time of year, it is good to practice simple and proven steps that we already know work in preventing mosquito bites.”

The KCHD recommends the following prevention tactics:

1. using a mosquito repellent that contains 10 – 35% DEET,
2. wearing light colored clothing and long-sleeved shirts and pants,
3. staying indoors during dusk,
4. remove or refresh water in bird baths, children’s wading pools, pet water bowls, and
5. empty other small containers that can collect water in your yard.

More information about prevention can be found at

<https://www.accesskent.com/Health/Environmental/vector.htm>.

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KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 260 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and three satellite clinics located in Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit www.accesskent.com/health.