



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

District 2 Public Health

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tip ‘n Toss Campaign

Prevent mosquito breeding and the spread of mosquito illnesses in Georgia

GAINESVILLE – District 2 Public Health is urging residents to clean up around their homes, their yards and their communities and discard unnecessary items that can hold water. **Tip ‘n Toss** after every rainfall to reduce the number of mosquitoes and prevent the spread of illnesses, including Zika virus in northeast Georgia. As of this date, no locally transmitted Zika cases have been reported in Georgia, but cases have been reported in returning travelers.

In the spring temperatures begin to warm up and mosquito eggs that have been dormant hatch into mosquitoes. In our area there are many different mosquito species that can spread different illnesses. For decades public health has informed residents about illnesses such as West Nile Virus, Eastern Equine Encephalitis, LaCrosse Encephalitis, and St. Louis Encephalitis. For several years now, public health has been keeping a close watch on Chickungunya and Dengue Fever, with cases reported as far north as Florida. Most recently, the threat of the spread of Zika virus has public health officials concerned.

Zika virus is transmitted primarily through the bite of infected *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes – both species are found in Georgia. *Aedes* mosquitoes typically bite during the day, especially in the early morning and late afternoon hours but some bite at night. They are called “container breeders” because they lay eggs in any type of container with water – even something as small as a bottle cap if it has water in it.

One of the most effective ways of preventing the spread of Zika virus is controlling the mosquito population by eliminating standing water around the home and in the yard. **Tip ‘n Toss!** After every rainfall, **tip** out water in flowerpots, planters, children’s toys and wading pools, and buckets. If it holds water and you don’t need it (old tires, bottles, cans), **toss** it out. Look for small bodies of water such as drainage ponds, tree stumps and tire ruts. Clean out gutters, remove piles of leaves and keep vegetation cut low to prevent landing sites for adult mosquitoes

For containers without lids or that are too big to **Tip 'N Toss** (bird baths, garden pools), use larvicides such as mosquito dunks or mosquito torpedoes and follow the label instructions. Larvicides will not hurt birds or animals.

Homeowners associations and neighborhoods, along with city and county governments, are encouraged to sponsor community cleanup days. Mosquitoes don't recognize property lines, so controlling their numbers will require a collaborative effort among all residents. Public health has been increasing mosquito surveillance and educating residents, but the greatest impact will be when individuals take personal responsibility for their homes, yards and communities.

It is also important to protect yourself from mosquito bites. Use [EPA-registered](#) insect repellents containing 20%-30% DEET, Picaridin, IR3535, or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus. Wear light colored clothing with long sleeves, long pants and socks to help prevent mosquito bites. Additional protection against mosquito bites can be gained by treating clothing with permethrin. Follow the product instructions on proper and safe use.

To learn more about Zika protection and prevention or Tip 'n Toss, log on to dph.ga.gov/zika or cdc.gov/zika or www.phdistrict2.org

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