



Department of Health and Human Services
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
286 Water Street
11 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Tel: (207) 287-8016; Fax (207) 287-9058
TTY Users: Dial 711 (Maine Relay)

Maine Health Alert Network (HAN) System

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

To: Health Care Providers
From: Dr. Isaac Benowitz, State Epidemiologist
Subject: **Maine CDC Reports Human EEE Case**
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Maine CDC Reports Human EEE Case

Summary

This week Maine CDC reported a human case of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) in a Penobscot County resident. This is the first human EEE case reported in Maine since 2015. The purpose of this health advisory is to remind clinicians to **consider testing for mosquito-borne arboviruses in patients presenting with unexplained flu-like symptoms, encephalitis, aseptic meningitis, or high fever.** In Maine, mosquitoes can spread EEE, Jamestown Canyon virus (JCV), and West Nile virus (WNV).

Background

Maine recorded unprecedented arboviral activity across the state in 2024, including an outbreak of EEE virus centered in north-central Maine. Maine detected EEE virus, JCV, and WNV in mosquitoes, wild birds, domestic animals, or humans in 13 of 16 counties. So far this year, Maine CDC reported:

- Positive for EEE: 1 mosquito pool (group of up to 50 mosquitoes collected during routine surveillance), 3 wild birds, 18 domestic animals, and 1 human
- Positive for JCV: 4 mosquito pools
- Positive for WNV: 1 mosquito pool, 33 wild birds, 2 domestic animals, and 2 humans (one case acquired in Maine, and one acquired out of state)

Two hard frost events across most of the state means the risk is dramatically reduced, but clinicians should still consider arboviral infections in people presenting with fever, encephalitis, or meningitis of unknown etiology even through early winter.

An individual with EEE developed symptoms in late September, was hospitalized in early October, and remains hospitalized. Acute samples collected on admission were negative for EEE virus, but samples

collected four weeks after admission were positive for EEE virus, indicating seroconversion. In 2021, Maine reported a human JCV case who developed symptoms in early November and tested positive in December. **These cases highlight the importance of considering mosquito-borne arboviral infections even as the weather gets colder. In addition, clinicians should consider retesting patients who tested negative for arboviruses earlier in the course of illness.**

For the latest information on arbovirus activity, refer to the Maine CDC's [weekly arboviral surveillance reports](#).

For more information on virus epidemiology, clinical presentations, risk factors, testing, education, and prevention of arboviral diseases, please refer to the recent Maine CDC health advisory on this topic:

- [Ongoing High Risk for Arboviral Infections, Continue to Test Patients](#) (September 26, 2024)

Reporting

Arboviral illnesses are reportable in Maine. All **suspected** cases, and positive laboratory reports, should be reported by electronic laboratory reporting, by fax to 1-800-293-7534, or by phone to Maine CDC's 24/7 disease reporting and consultation line at 1-800-821-5821.

Additional Information

- Maine CDC arboviral diseases website: www.maine.gov/dhhs/vectorborne
- U.S. CDC mosquito website: www.cdc.gov/mosquitoes
- Maine CDC disease reporting and consultation line: **1-800-821-5821** (available 24/7)