

Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) is a very serious viral infection transmitted to people from the bite of an infected mosquito. The disease is especially severe in children as well as adults over 50. The transmission cycle of EEE virus is most common in and near areas of wetlands, especially freshwater hardwood and cedar wetlands. There is no vaccine or effective treatment for humans. Therefore, prevention strategies are critical.

Schools play an important role in preventing EEE. In response to the Maine CDC recommendations, the Westbrook Schools and the Athletic Department make the following recommendations:

1) Cover up outdoors.

Student athletes and those on outdoor field trips and participating in other outdoor activities for a significant amount of time when the temperature is above 50 degrees should be encouraged to:

* Cover up.

Cover up with long sleeve shirts, pants, and socks.

2) Use repellent.

Use a US CDC-recommended effective insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus on exposed skin and/or clothing. The repellent/insecticide permethrin can be used on clothing and can be effective through several washes. Always follow the package directions. For details on recommended repellents see:

http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/ga/insect_repellent.htm.

All Westbrook athletic teams have been provided insect repellent and hand sanitizer.

Spectators attending athletic events are encouraged to follow the same guidelines: cover up and use insect repellent.

3) Limit/reschedule evening outdoor activities or use insect repellent.

Unless the dusk temperature is forecast to be less than 50 degrees, limit and even reschedule outdoor group evening activities such as school athletic events so people are able to go indoors by one hour before sunset, or make sure participants are using and spectators know to use insect repellent. Westbrook HS COACHES HAVE INSECT REPELLANT.

The Maine CDC has also created a one-page fact sheet for parents which you can access at:

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/ddc/epi/vector-borne/eee/EEE-Fact-Shee-Parents.doc>

