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Health Department Officials Remind Residents the Importance of Staying Safe from Mosquito Bites

St. Johns, Stanton, Ithaca, MI – The Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) urges residents to stay safe and prevent illness by taking steps to protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites. In some cases, these bites spread diseases that can make you sick, like West Nile, dengue, Zika, Chikungunya, or malaria.

The best protection against mosquitoes is by using EPA-registered insect repellents with one of the following active ingredients: DEET, Picaridin, IR3535, Oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE), Para-menthane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone. When used as directed, EPA-registered insect repellents are proven safe and effective, even for pregnant and breastfeeding women.

To protect babies and children against mosquito bites, you can dress your child in clothing that covers their arms and legs and cover any strollers or baby carriers with mosquito netting. If you're using insect repellent on your child, it's important to note:

- Always follow label instructions.
- **Do not** use products containing OLE or PMD on children under 3 years old.
- **Do not** apply repellent to a child's hands, eyes, mouth, cuts, or irritated skin.
- **Adults:** Apply repellent onto your hands and then apply to a child's face.

Signs of a mosquito bite can include: A puffy and reddish bump appearing a few minutes after the bite, a hard, itchy, reddish-brown bump, or multiple bumps appearing a day or so after the bite or bites, small blisters instead of hard bumps, or dark spots that look like bruises. In some cases, severe reactions can occur in children, adults bitten by mosquito species they haven't been exposed to previously, or in people with immune system disorders.

To learn more about staying safe from mosquitoes, visit: www.cdc.gov/mosquitoes.

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The Mid-Michigan District Health Department has proudly served the residents of Clinton, Gratiot, and Montcalm Counties since 1966. We take action to protect, maintain and improve the health of our community.