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News Release

For immediate release:

September 4, 2015

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Chikungunya—Mosquito-Transmitted Virus Affects Travelers Returning to Yakima County

Actions Recommended:

- Avoid mosquitoes at home in Yakima County (West Nile Virus) and when traveling internationally (chikungunya, dengue, malaria).
- Visiting family or friends is not less risky than tourism.
- Use mosquito repellent.
- Wear long sleeves, pants and shoes.

Background:

Five cases of chikungunya virus infection have been reported in the past several months among travelers returning to Yakima County from travel to Mexico. An epidemic involving over a million cases since December 2013 remains underway in Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America. Chikungunya (chicken-gun-ya) is virus spread between humans and sometime animals by the bite of infected mosquitoes. Illness occurs 2-14 days after the bite. Symptoms include high fever followed by severe joint pains, often with a rash. No medication is known to cure the infection. Joint pains and stiffness may continue for months or years after the initial illness ends. Treatment is with anti-inflammatory drugs (ibuprofen, naproxen) while the immune system kills the virus and the body recovers on its own. Infected cases should stay indoors until the initial illness resolves to avoid spreading the virus to others through mosquitoes.

Mosquito Repellents:

- Use repellents that contains DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus.
- Follow label directions carefully.
- Never apply DEET directly to your child's face or put it on children's hands.
- Apply repellent first to your own hands and then onto the child's face.
- Do not use oil of lemon eucalyptus on children under age three.
- <http://www.cdc.gov/westnile/faq/repellent.html>

For more information on chikungunya and its prevention, visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/index.html>

www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm

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