



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HAWAII COUNTY ASK COMMUNITY TO HELP "FIGHT THE BITE"

Statewide Public Education Campaign Encourages Participation in Ending Dengue Fever in Hawaii

CAPTAIN COOK, HI – The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) today launched "Fight the Bite," a statewide public education campaign that seeks to end the spread of dengue fever in Hawaii. The campaign, which launched at a press conference held in partnership with the County of Hawaii at Yano Hall in Kailua-Kona on Hawaii Island, will inform the public about dengue fever and encourage their participation in preventing the spread of the illness in Hawaii.

"The health and safety of our community and visitors is paramount, and the Department of Health is working collaboratively with all of our partners – including fellow state agencies, the Counties, healthcare providers, business leaders, nonprofit service providers and more – to address this important situation and end the spread of dengue fever in Hawaii as quickly as possible," said Virginia Pressler, M.D., director of the Hawaii State Department of Health. "In order to keep Hawaii safe and dengue-free, we are asking the community for their help in following the easy tips and suggestions shared through our campaign and joining us as together we Fight the Bite!"

The "Fight the Bite" campaign will roll out this week through a variety of interactive marketing strategies, including the [DOH website](#), earned media, advertising in local print publications and radio outlets, marketing collateral, engagement through multiple digital platforms such as [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), and outreach at the local level.

Hawaii County Mayor Billy Kenoi announced a series of public information meetings that will offer the community an opportunity to learn more about the "Fight the Bite" campaign and engage with county and state officials. The first meeting will be held today at 6 p.m. at Yano Hall.

"The County of Hawaii has been working closely with the State Department of Health to respond quickly and efficiently to the cases of dengue fever in Hawaii and we are dedicated to minimizing its impacts on Hawaii Island and the state," said Mayor Billy Kenoi. "We encourage the public to take part in the "Fight the Bite" campaign and to start doing so by joining us at our

community meetings, which will provide opportunities to ask questions and learn more about this important initiative.”

Taking part in the “Fight the Bite” campaign is easy. The DOH recommends applying mosquito repellent containing 20 to 30 percent DEET, wearing long sleeved shirts and pants, using indoor insecticides, and reducing the amount of mosquitoes on your property by clearing areas with standing water.

Dengue fever is spread through mosquito contact – mosquitoes carrying the illness from an infected individual can spread it from one individual to another through mosquito bites. Travelers to areas with infected mosquitoes where dengue fever is endemic are at the highest risk of acquiring the disease. Symptoms of dengue fever typically begin within a week after a bite from an infected mosquito and may include fever, joint or muscle pains, headache or pain behind the eyes, and rash.

DOH confirmed today a total of 27 cases of locally transmitted dengue fever on Hawaii Island. All of the patients have recovered or are recovering.

For more information on “Fight the Bite,” visit <http://health.hawaii.gov>.

Public Information Meetings Schedule:

All meetings will be held at 6 p.m. The public is encouraged to attend.

Monday, Nov. 9 at 6 p.m.

Yano Hall
82-6156 Mamalahoa Hwy., Capt. Cook, HI

Tuesday, Nov. 10 at 6 p.m.

Naalehu Community Center
95-5635 Mamalahoa Hwy., Naalehu, HI

Thursday, Nov. 12 at 6 p.m.

Konawaena High School Cafeteria
81-1043 Konawaena School Rd., Kealahou, HI

Friday, Nov. 13 at 6 p.m.

Honokaa High School Cafeteria
45-527 Pakalana St, Honokaa, HI

Monday, Nov. 16 at 6 p.m.

Hilo High School Cafeteria
556 Waianuenue Ave, Hilo, HI

Tuesday, Nov. 17 at 6 p.m.

Keaau High School Cafeteria
16-725 Keaau-Pahoa Rd, Keaau, HI

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