

## HALTON REGION PUBLIC HEALTH • Office of the Medical Officer of Health

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TO: Halton Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Emergency Departments, other Healthcare Providers

FROM: Dr. Patrick Galange, Associate Medical Officer of Health

DATE: September 8, 2025

RE: Eastern Equine Encephalitis Virus (EEEV) in a Milton Horse

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### QUICK FACTS

- An equine case of Eastern Equine Encephalitis virus (EEEV) has been confirmed in a Milton horse with no history of travel, indicating local acquisition. This is the first confirmed EEEV case in an animal in Halton Region since provincial surveillance testing began in 2011.
- Hamilton Public Health [recently received laboratory confirmation of a human case of EEEV](#). There have been no human cases reported in Halton Region.
- EEEV infection is rare in humans, but can be severe. Neurological disease is associated with a high case fatality rate (30%) and often results in significant long-term disability (50-90%).
- Consider EEEV serology, as part of your work-up, in patients presenting with a fever and/or neurological symptoms, where mosquito exposure is a potential risk factor.
- There are no approved antivirals or vaccinations for EEEV in humans.
- Report any suspected or confirmed cases of EEEV causing encephalitis to Halton Region Public Health by calling 311.

### KEY MESSAGES FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

- Similar to WNV, birds are the primary reservoir for EEEV. Mosquitoes can [transmit the virus](#) from infected birds to horses and humans, who are considered dead-end hosts and do not spread the virus further.
- Most cases of EEEV are asymptomatic. When symptoms do occur, the incubation period is [3-10 days](#).
  - EEEV can cause a flu-like illness (fever, chills, body aches, and joint pain) or neurologic disease, including meningitis or encephalitis.
  - Neurological disease caused by EEEV may present at the onset of illness or develop after several days of febrile illness. It can manifest as meningitis and/or encephalitis, with symptoms such as headache, vomiting, seizures, paralysis and behavioral changes.
  - There is no specific treatment for EEEV. Clinical management is supportive, focusing on symptom relief and seizure control.
- Serology is the preferred method to detect EEEV infection. For additional laboratory information, visit Public Health Ontario's [webpage](#).
  - Specimens must be sent to the Public Health Ontario Lab (PHOL) with both the [General Test Requisition Form](#) and the [Vector-borne and Zoonotic Virus Testing Intake Form](#).

## KEY MESSAGES FOR PATIENTS

- No human vaccines against EEEV exist. Counsel patients on mosquito-bite prevention, especially when visiting swampy areas, where EEEV is mostly found. For more information on how residents and their families can protect themselves from mosquito bites, visit [halton.ca](http://halton.ca).

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Eastern Equine Encephalitis Virus: History and Enhanced Surveillance in Ontario](#), Public Health Ontario
- [Eastern Equine Encephalitis: Symptoms, Diagnosis, and Treatment](#), CDC
- [Eastern Equine Encephalitis Virus](#), CDC

Please report all suspected/confirmed cases of [Diseases of Public Health Significance](#) (only report COVID-19 cases occurring in high-risk settings) to Public Health immediately by calling 311, 905-825-6000 or toll free at 1-866-442-5866.

PLEASE PROVIDE A COPY TO ALL PHYSICIANS IN YOUR OFFICE AND/OR POST IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS AND PHYSICIAN LOUNGES. IF YOU HAVE ANY ISSUES WITH THIS ATTACHMENT, PLEASE EMAIL [DOCTORS@HALTON.CA](mailto:DOCTORS@HALTON.CA).