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FEDERAL SECURITY AGENCY
Public Health Service
Communicable Disease Center
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ATLANTA, Sept. 10--For the first time, mosquitoes have been proven to be the insect carriers of eastern equine encephalomyelitis, a severe and often fatal virus disease.

Four researchers in the Communicable Disease Center, Public Health Service, have just published a report confirming a long-held scientific suspicion that mosquitoes are the probable vector of this type of encephalomyelitis.

The workers are Miss Beatrice F. Howitt, Dr. H. R. Dodge, Dr. L. K. Bishop, and Miss Rachael H. Gorrie, all of the virus and rickettsia branch, laboratory division of the CDC, located at Montgomery, Alabama. Their findings are reported in Science.

During the summer of 1948, the scientists relate, a few horses in South Georgia were diagnosed as having encephalomyelitis. The brains from two animals were sent to the Montgomery laboratory, where the virus of the eastern equine type of the disease (abbreviated as E.E.E.) was recovered from them.

At the same time, mosquitoes were collected from farms in Burke and Jenkins Counties, Georgia. Sick horses previously had been reported from these counties.

The epidemiology division of CDC, in collaboration with the Georgia State Department of Public Health, collected 43 specimens of Mansonia perturbans. This is a mosquito known to be a persistent feeder on warm-blooded animals, such as horses and chickens. E.E.E. virus was recovered from these mosquitoes in the laboratory, the researchers report.

Further studies are planned for the coming season.

Eastern equine is one of three types of encephalomyelitis currently found in the United States, according to authorities in CDC headquarters here. Symptoms are early mild fever, later with evidence of brain or nerve involvement, insomnia, restlessness and twitching, but the pattern varies widely. It affects all ages, but most frequently strikes very young children. It is most prevalent in late summer and fall.