

WEST NILE VIRUS IN NEW JERSEY



Know the Facts • Protect Yourself



IMPORTANT FACTS

WHAT IS WEST NILE VIRUS (WNV)?

West Nile virus is one of a family of viruses that can be transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito.

HOW DOES WNV SPREAD?

Mosquitoes can become infected with WNV by feeding on birds that have the virus in their bloodstream. Once a mosquito is infected with the virus it can transmit the virus to humans, birds, horses or other mammals through a bite.

CAN I GET WNV DIRECTLY FROM CROWS OR OTHER PEOPLE?

There is no evidence to date suggesting that humans can get WNV by touching a dead bird. However, it is strongly suggested for general sanitary reasons that you use protective gloves when handling any sick or injured bird. WNV is NOT transmitted from person to person.



WHY IS THE STATE TESTING BIRDS (ESPECIALLY CROWS) FOR WNV?

Crows appear to be highly sensitive to the virus and provide a barometer for us to detect WNV activity in your community. Knowledge of positive birds in your area allows mosquito control agencies to perform more targeted surveillance and control activities.


IF AN INFECTED MOSQUITO BITES ME HOW LONG WOULD IT TAKE TO DEVELOP SYMPTOMS?



Most people bitten by infected mosquitoes do not develop any symptoms. However, when symptoms of infection do occur, they usually appear 5-15 days from the time you were bitten.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF WNV INFECTION?

Most people who are infected show no or only mild symptoms such as: low-grade fever, headache, and occasionally swollen lymph glands. More severe signs and symptoms can include: high fever, stiff neck, muscle weakness, disorientation, brain inflammation (encephalitis), coma and, rarely, death.



WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE BEEN INFECTED WITH WEST NILE VIRUS?

Contact your family physician.

HOW IS WNV TREATED?

There is no specific treatment for WNV. In more severe cases, patients are treated with supportive therapy, which can include hospitalization, intravenous (IV) fluids and respiratory support.



IF I LIVE IN AN AREA WITH POSITIVE BIRDS AND MOSQUITOES WILL I GET WNV?

It is highly unlikely. Even in areas where mosquitoes do carry the virus very few mosquitoes are infected (less than 1%). If the mosquito is infected, less than 1% of people who get bitten and become infected will get severely ill. The chances that you will become severely ill from any one mosquito bite are extremely small.

CONTROL & PREVENTION

WHAT CAN I DO TO REDUCE MY RISK OF GETTING WNV?

1. Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts when outdoors, particularly at dawn & dusk.
2. Make sure screens on windows and doors are in good condition.
3. Use mosquito repellent when outdoors. Be sure to use according to the label—less than 10% DEET for children.
4. Eliminate standing water, old tires, cans and blocked gutters from your property.
5. Maintain your swimming pools. Empty or cover swimming pools when not in use.
6. Keep birdbaths clean. Change the water at least once a week.
7. Report mosquito concerns to your local mosquito control agency.

Contact your county mosquito control agency for more information about mosquitoes and how you can best control them.

IF I FIND A DEAD BIRD ON MY PROPERTY WHAT SHOULD I DO?

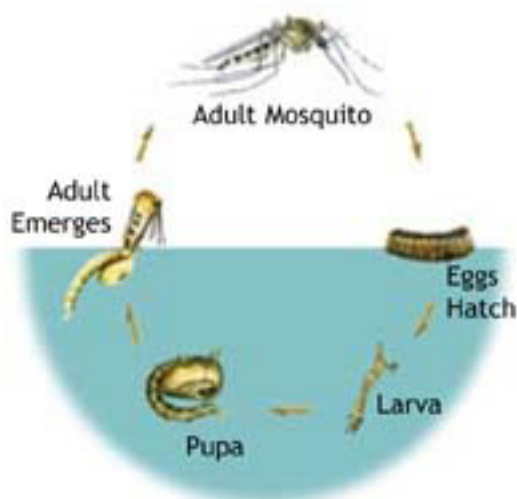
Contact your local health department for details.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I NOTICE A LOT OF MOSQUITOES ON MY PROPERTY?

Contact your county mosquito control agency to schedule an inspection of your property.

Mosquitoes need water to breed and grow. Almost anything that holds water for one week or longer can produce these pests. To eliminate mosquito problems, eliminate any standing water on your property.

The Mosquito Life Cycle



For Additional Information Contact:

www.state.nj.us/health

www.state.nj.us/dep/mosquito

www.state.nj.us/agriculture

www-rci.rutgers.edu/~insects/njmos.htm

www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbib/westnile

www.epa.gov/pesticides



Produced and Supported by:



The Office
of the
Governor



NJ Dept. of
Health and
Senior Services



NJ Dept. of
Environmental
Protection



NJ Dept. of
Agriculture

NJ State Mosquito
Control Commission

NJ Mosquito
Control Association

Rutgers University
Cook College

New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services
Communicable Disease Service
Infectious & Zoonotic Disease Program