

How to Control Mosquito Breeding

Habitat

The most effective way to limit your exposure to the virus is to eliminate mosquito breeding habitat on your property and encourage neighbors to do the same.



- o Eliminate sources of standing water
- o Dispose of used tires
- o Empty and turn over plastic wading pools
- o Use landscaping to eliminate areas that collect stagnant water on your property
- o Change the water in bird baths frequently
- o Keep roof gutters clean and free from debris
- o Dispose of or drill holes in the bottom of containers that collect water

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West Nile Virus:

*What You Should Know
and How You Can
Protect Yourself*

IOWA COUNTY

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

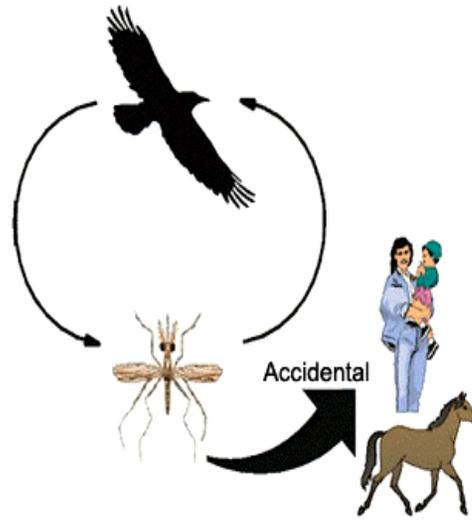
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West Nile virus (WNV) is a disease-causing agent that is transmitted to humans, horses and other mammals by infected mosquitoes. The virus was first detected in the United States during the summer of 1999 in New York City. It has been present, however, in areas of Africa and Asia since the late 1930's. The first confirmed cases of *West Nile virus* in the state of Wisconsin occurred in the summer of 2001.

Nature of the Disease

The natural cycle of the disease is between birds and mosquitoes. When a mosquito feeds on an infected bird, the virus is transmitted from the bird to the mosquito. After a few days, the virus moves into the mosquito's saliva and can then be transmitted to other birds, humans, horses, etc. upon feeding. The infection of humans, horses, and other mammals do not contribute to the spread of the disease. The only way that *West Nile* is spread between animals is by the bite of an infected mosquito.

West Nile disease cycle



Prevalence and Risks of Infection

It is estimated that less than 1% of all mosquitoes are actually infected with the virus. Of those people that are actually infected with the virus, only about 20% will become mildly ill. About 1 in 150 people infected with the virus becomes seriously ill. These more severe cases can result in death in about 9-15% of cases. People at the greatest risk for severe illness are those over the age of 50.

West Nile Virus Hotline:

(800) 433-1610

Mild Symptoms

- o Fever
- o Headache
- o Muscle Pains
- o Nausea
- o Vomiting
- o Swollen lymph nodes

Severe Symptoms

- o Sudden high fever
- o Neck stiffness
- o Extreme muscle weakness
- o Convulsions
- o Disorientation

Prevention

- o Limit outdoor activity during the peak hours for mosquito activity. These hours are around dusk and dawn.
- o Wear protective clothing such as long-sleeved shirts, pants, socks and shoes.
- o Use an insect repellent containing DEET.
- o When using repellents, make sure to follow the instructions on the label.
- o For children 2-12 years use a product with less than 10% DEET and apply to them from your own hands like a lotion
- o A higher DEET value does not mean that the product is more effective, it relates to the length of time that you are protected