



WEST NILE VIRUS

West Nile Virus (WNV) virus infection can cause serious disease. It is viral disease that has emerged in temperate regions of North America and presents a threat to both public and animal health. WNV has become established as a seasonal disease that flares up in the summer months and continues into the fall.



Transmission (Spread of Disease)

- WNV seems to spread to humans most commonly through the bite of a mosquito that has fed on infected animals.
- WNV can also be spread through blood transfusions or from mother to child.
- WNV is not spread through casual contact with people.

Symptoms

- **No Symptoms in Most People.** Approximately 80% of those infected never show any symptoms, but there is no way to know in advance if you will develop an illness or not.
- **Milder Symptoms in Some People.** Approximately 20% of those infected experience only mild symptoms for as short as a few days to as long as several weeks:
 - Body aches
 - Fever
 - Headache
 - Swollen lymph nodes
 - Nausea
 - Vomiting
 - Skin rash
- **Serious Symptoms in a Few People.** One in 150 of those infected with WNV develops serious symptoms that may last several weeks:
 - High fever
 - Convulsions
 - Headache
 - Muscle weakness
 - Neck stiffness
 - Coma
 - Stupor
 - Tremors
 - Disorientation
 - Vision loss
 - Numbness
 - Paralysis
 - Permanent neurological damage

Treatment

- There is no specific treatment for WNV infection. In cases with milder symptoms, people experience symptoms such as fever and aches that pass on their own, although illness may last weeks to months. In more severe cases, people usually need to go to the hospital where they can receive supportive treatment including intravenous fluids, help with breathing, and nursing care.
- If you experience any symptoms, contact your physician.

Prevention

The best way to avoid WNV is to avoid mosquitoes:

- Use an EPA-registered insect repellent with DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535 and apply it according to label instructions.
- Try to wear long sleeves, pants and socks—clothing can protect from mosquitoes.
- Be aware of peak mosquito hours and West Nile viral outbreaks in your area.
- Drain standing water to prevent mosquitoes from multiplying.
- Maintain screens on windows and doors to prevent mosquitoes from entering buildings. Repair or replace screens with tears or holes

Where to Find Additional Information

- Army Public Health Center—
<https://phc.amedd.army.mil/topics/discond/diseases/Pages/WestNileVirus.aspx>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)— <http://www.cdc.gov/westnile/>
- World Health Organization (WHO)—<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs354/en/>
- American Red Cross—<http://www.redcross.org/news/article/ca/santa-rosa/West-Nile-Virus-Alert>
- Ready Army—www.ready.army.mil

It's up to you. Prepare strong. Get an emergency supply kit with enough supplies for at least three days, make an emergency plan with your family and be informed about what might happen.

