

Helpful Tips

- Treat a long-sleeved shirt with permethrin and hang by the door. This is perfect to slip on when just running outside for a quick moment. Permethrin-treated clothing repels and kills ticks, mosquitoes, and other arthropods and retains this effect after repeated laundering.
- Keep a spray bottle of repellent by the door so it is convenient to apply before heading outside.
- Keep a spray bottle of repellent in the car.
- Use plant pots without saucers.
- Make a checklist of items in your yard to check weekly for water accumulation.
- Rake up fallen magnolia leaves.
- Do not use plastic sheeting as a weed barrier.
- Fill tree holes with sand.
- Remove litter and debris. A soda bottle cap can hold enough water to breed mosquitoes.

Contacts

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West Nile Virus



WHAT EVERYONE NEEDS TO KNOW ...

Prevention and Protection

Breaking the breeding cycle

During its life span, an adult female mosquito can lay hundreds of eggs. These will become biting adults and continue the breeding cycle unless you eliminate breeding sites.

Most mosquitoes prefer stagnant water in shady areas for breeding. Their eggs can hatch only in water, but some mosquitoes will lay eggs in dry places where they lie dormant until rain or another source of standing water triggers the hatching cycle.

The female mosquito lays her eggs every ten to 14 days. Once the eggs are immersed in water, within two days they will hatch into larvae and within two weeks an adult mosquito will appear and begin the cycle all over again.

You can help prevent breeding by following the tips in this brochure.

Mosquito control

Controlling mosquitoes is essential to successfully preventing West Nile virus infection in people and animals. Eliminating mosquito breeding sites around the home and the community is an important first step. Individuals can help protect themselves, their homes and their communities in a number of ways.



- Clean roof gutters.
- Remove containers that hold water, like plant dishes, toys, buckets, etc.
- Turn wheelbarrows upside down when not in use.
- Recycle discarded tires.

Personal protection

- Apply insect repellent to exposed skin and clothing. The most effective repellents contain **DEET**, **picaridin** or **oil of lemon eucalyptus**. When using repellent, always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Apply **permethrin** to clothing, shoes, bed nets and camping gear but not to skin. Follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors, especially at dawn and dusk.

Protection at home

- Drain or change bird bath, pet dish and wading pool water at least twice a week.
- Remove trash such as soda cans and cellophane wrappers - even small items like bottle caps.



Health Facts

West Nile virus (WNV) is spread by infected mosquitoes and can cause serious, life-altering and even fatal disease.

Transmission

WNV usually infects birds, but it can be spread to humans by mosquitoes that feed on infected birds and then bite humans. All it takes is one bite from an infected mosquito to get WNV.



photo courtesy of CDC - James Gathany

Adults are at the highest risk

Although people over age 50 have the highest risk of becoming seriously ill when they get infected with WNV, people of all ages can become ill.

Prevent serious disease

WNV affects the central nervous system and can be very serious. Some people who get infected with WNV develop a paralysis or an inflammation of the brain known as encephalitis. These severe diseases usually require hospitalization. Symptoms may last several weeks and some effects may be permanent.

Some people develop a less severe illness called West Nile fever. This illness usually goes away and generally does not require medical treatment. Fortunately, most people who get infected with WNV do not have any ill effects.

Symptoms

Symptoms of severe illness include:

- Severe headache
- High fever
- Mental confusion
- Stiff neck
- Muscle weakness
- Coma
- Tremors (shaking)
- Paralysis

See your health care provider if you develop any of these symptoms.