

WEST NILE VIRUS INFORMATION

We are all aware that southern N.J. has had some instances of the West Nile Virus. The information contained on this page will hopefully explain and answer many of your questions regarding this virus.

TIPS FOR MOSQUITO CONTROL

There are 63 species of mosquitoes found in New Jersey. Not only are mosquitoes an annoyance, some species have the ability to spread disease. In light of the introduction of the West Nile Virus, the State and County are asking all of us to assist them in controlling mosquito breeding grounds in and around our houses.

The single most effective way to control mosquitoes around your house is to remove standing water.

- Empty and discard empty paint cans, buckets, old tires, tin cans, etc.
- Change water in birdbaths, fountains, twice a week
- Clean clogged rain gutters - check often
- Aerate ornamental ponds (water gardens) or stock with goldfish
- Empty watering cans, flower pots, ceramic pots, turn over wheelbarrows
- Drill holes in recycling containers
- Landscape so that no water collects on your property

SWIMMING POOLS

The Burlington County Health Department investigates numerous nuisance complaints regarding stagnant swimming pools. They offer the following guidelines to control mosquito breeding in your backyard pool.

- Maintain swimming pools with appropriate chemicals and circulate water daily
- Remove leaf debris regularly as leaves provide shelter for larvae
- Maintain adequate chemical residuals
- Use a biological pesticide in the pool if you will be away and cannot maintain it
- Do not let water accumulate in swimming pool covers - elevate covers in the center with floatation devices to prevent ponding
- Remove or fill-in pools that will not be used
- Empty or cover tots swimming-wading pools when not in use

For further information regarding pools, contact the Burlington County Health Dept. at (609) 265 - 5515.

For further information regarding mosquito control, contact the Burlington County Mosquito Division at (609) 265 - 5064.

Questions & Answers About The West Nile Virus

WHY IS THE WEST NILE VIRUS CONSIDERED HARMFUL TO MAN?

West Nile Virus can cause a form of Encephalitis, which is an infection which causes a swelling or inflammation of the brain, which in some cases, if not treated quickly, can result in death. This virus is more commonly found in Africa, the Middle East and West Asia. It is closely related to the St. Louis Encephalitis, virus commonly found in the United States.

HOW DO PEOPLE GET THE WEST NILE VIRUS?

The virus is transmitted to people when they are bitten by a mosquito which has been infected by the virus.

HOW DOES THE TRANSMISSION CYCLE WORK?

Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected BIRDS. When this happens, the virus will begin to circulate in their blood. Afterwards, the virus begins to incubate, a process that may last 10 to 14 days.

CAN THE WEST NILE VIRUS BE PASSED BETWEEN HUMANS?

Quite simply, NO !

CAN YOU GET THE WEST NILE VIRUS DIRECTLY FROM BIRDS?

At present, there is NO evidence to show this is possible.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF THE WEST NILE VIRUS?

Most infections resemble a flu-like illness, with symptoms such as fever, fatigue, head and body aches, diarrhea and a sore throat. Swollen lymph glands are also common, and in some cases, a skin rash. Severe infections may be marked by neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, paralysis, coma, and in some rare instances, death.

IS A WOMAN'S PREGNANCY AT RISK IF SHE CONTACTS WEST NILE VIRUS?

There is NO documented evidence that a pregnancy is at risk due to infection with West Nile Virus.

IS THERE A VACCINE AGAINST THE WEST NILE VIRUS?

No.

WHAT SHOULD A PERSON DO IF THEY BELIEVE THEY'VE BECOME INFECTED WITH THE VIRUS?

Seek immediate medical attention.

WHO IS AT RISK FOR GETTING WEST NILE VIRUS?

Any resident where viral activity has been noted is considered at risk. Those over the age of 50 are considered most at risk of severe infection.

HOW DO PETS OR LIVESTOCK BECOME INFECTED WITH THE VIRUS?

By the bite of an infected mosquito, the same as people. There is no evidence to show that it can be spread to one's pet should that animal come in contact with an infected animal.

PERSONAL PRECAUTIONS

- Stay indoors at Dawn and Dusk, as well as the early evening hours.
- Whenever outdoors, wear long sleeve shirts as well as long pants & socks.
- Apply insect repellent sparingly to exposed skin.
- Repellents may irritate the eyes and mouth, so avoid applying any repellent to a child's hands. Insect repellent should never be used on children under the age of 3.
- Mosquitoes are able to bite through thin layers of clothing, so it is also advisable to apply a light layer of repellent to one's clothing.<
- Whenever an insecticide or repellent is used, the manufacturer's directions should be read thoroughly and followed closely before any usage is attempted.

Click [here](#) for The State of N.J. Dept. of Health and Senior Services information on the West Nile Virus.