



WEST NILE VIRUS

West Nile Virus (WNV) is a 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.

All personnel should maintain a basic level of preparedness for all potential hazards.

You are encouraged to get an emergency supply kit, make a family emergency plan, and be informed about what might happen.

Transmission

- 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

- Approximately 80% of those infected never show any symptoms.
- Approximately 20% of those infected experience only mild symptoms for a few days:
 - Fever
 - Headache
 - Body aches
 - Nausea
 - Vomiting
- One in 150 of those infected with WNV develops serious symptoms that may last several weeks:
 - High fever
 - Headache
 - Neck stiffness
 - Stupor
 - Disorientation
 - Coma
 - Tremors
 - Convulsions
 - Muscle weakness
 - Swollen lymph nodes
 - Skin rash
 - Vision loss
 - Numbness
 - Paralysis
 - Permanent neurological damage

Treatment

If you experience any symptoms, contact your physician.

Prevention

The best way to avoid WNV is to avoid mosquitoes:

- Wear insect repellent containing the chemical DEET on any exposed skin when outside.
- 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.

Where to Find Additional Information

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/resources/WNV_factsheet.pdf
- www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/qa/prevention.htm

Semper Paratus

Be “Always Ready.” Get an emergency supply kit good for at least three days, make an emergency plan with your family, and be informed about what might happen.