

WEST NILE VIRUS (WNS)

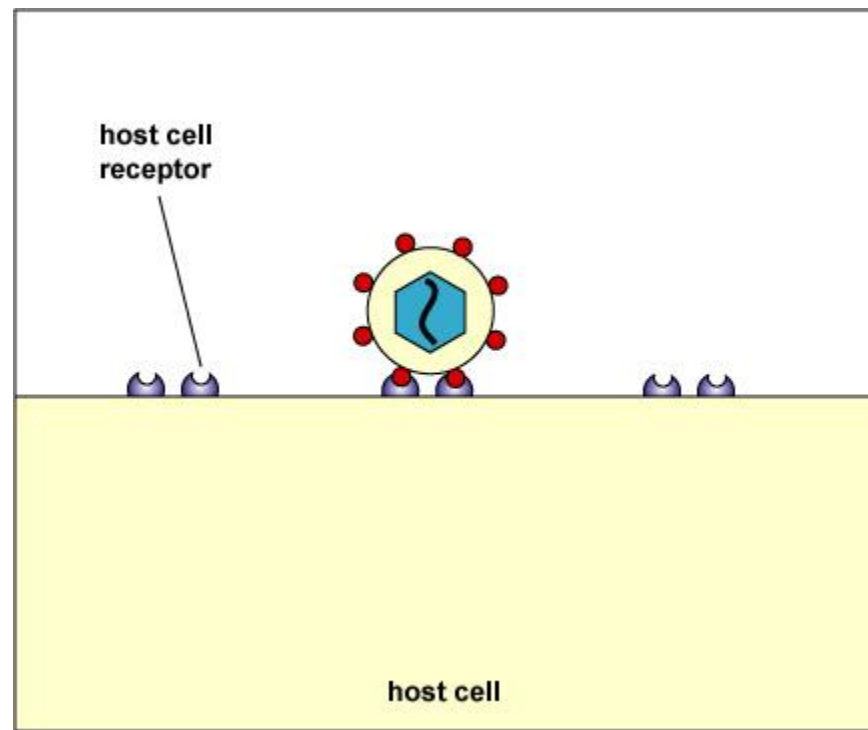
DEFINITION

West Nile virus is an infection transmitted by mosquitoes. If you become infected with West Nile virus, you may not experience any signs or symptoms or you may experience only minor ones, such as fever and mild headache. However, some people who become infected with West Nile virus develop a life-threatening illness that includes inflammation of the brain.

MODES OF TRANSMISSION

The main route of human infection with West Nile virus is through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds, which may circulate the virus in their blood for a few days. The virus eventually gets into the mosquito's salivary glands. During later blood meals (when mosquitoes bite), the virus may be injected into humans and animals, where it can multiply and possibly cause illness. In a very small number of cases, WNV also has spread through blood transfusions, organ transplants, breastfeeding and even during pregnancy from mother to baby.

HOW DOES A VIRUS REPRODUCE



SYMPTOMS

Mild signs and symptoms of a West Nile virus infection generally go away on their own. But severe signs and symptoms — such as a severe headache, disorientation or sudden weakness require immediate attention.

DIAGNOSIS

Most WNV infections are mild and often clinically unapparent.

- Approximately 20% of those infected develop a generally mild illness (West Nile fever).
- The incubation period is thought to range from 3 to 14 days.
- Symptoms generally last 3 to 6 days.

Reports from earlier outbreaks describe the mild form of WNV infection as a **febrile illness of sudden onset** often accompanied by

▶	malaise	▶	headache
▶	anorexia	▶	myalgia
▶	nausea	▶	rash
▶	vomiting	▶	lymphadenopathy

PREVENTION

Exposure to mosquitoes where West Nile virus exists increases your risk of getting West Nile virus. Protect yourself from mosquitoes by using mosquito repellent and wearing clothing that covers your skin to reduce your risk.

DEET: POTENT, BUT SAFE

One of the most effective mosquito repellents is one of the oldest around. DEET was first developed for use by the U.S. Army in 1946, and it became available to the public in 1957. Many other products have hit the market since then, but few compare to DEET. In fact, it's one of two ingredients in mosquito repellent that the CDC recommends for preventing mosquito-borne diseases. The other is picaridin, and the CDC believes these two ingredients are more effective than other mosquito repellents.

In a study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in 2002, researchers compared several types of mosquito repellents head-to-head in laboratory tests. Fifteen brave study volunteers took turns sticking an arm treated with mosquito repellent into a cage full of hungry bloodsuckers. The researchers took note of how long it took a mosquito to bite.

"OFF! Deep Woods" repellent, a product containing about 24% DEET, fared the best. Its protection lasted an average of five hours.

Premium Insect Repellent 20% PICARIDIN - 3oz spray