

# WEST NILE VIRUS



West Nile virus (WNV) is a virus in the United States that can cause serious disease.

Primarily a disease in wild birds, WNV can also be spread to people and other animals by infected mosquitoes.

## Mosquitoes Spread West Nile Virus

- ❖ Humans become infected with the virus through the bite of a WNV-infected mosquito.
- ❖ Not all mosquitoes are infected with WNV, but it is best to avoid mosquitoes as a general precaution.

## Reduce your risk of becoming sick – Prevention begins at home

### Don't breed mosquitoes

Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water and can complete the cycle from egg to adult in just 5 days.



- ❖ Check for and remove all sources of standing water. Mosquitoes can breed in very small amounts of water.
- ❖ A swimming pool that is not well maintained can breed thousands of mosquitoes each week.
- ❖ Change the water in wading pools, birdbaths and pet bowls twice weekly. Mosquito-eating fish should be placed in ornamental ponds and water gardens.

### Don't let mosquitoes into your home

- ❖ Make sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens.
- ❖ Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.

### Reduce your risk of mosquito bites

- ❖ Mosquitoes are most active during the evening and early morning hours (dusk to dawn).
- ❖ If you must go outdoors during these times, wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts and other protective clothing to avoid mosquito bites.
- ❖ Use insect repellents (10-30% DEET for adults and children over 2 months of age) on exposed skin according to label instructions.



## Symptoms of WNV Infection

### Not everyone infected will get sick

- ❖ 80% of infected persons will experience NO symptoms.
- ❖ **West Nile Fever:** 1 in 5 (20%) of infected persons will experience symptoms such as fever, headache, body aches, nausea, vomiting, and sometimes swollen lymph glands or a skin rash on the chest, stomach and back. Symptoms can last for as short as a few days, although even healthy people have been sick for several weeks.

- ❖ **West Nile Neuroinvasive Disease:** 1 in 150 infections result in severe illness such as meningitis, encephalitis or muscle paralysis. Symptoms include headache, high fever, stiff neck, stupor, disorientation, coma, muscle weakness, and paralysis. Recovery is long term and neurological effects may be permanent.
- ❖ The elderly and immune-compromised individuals (such as those with HIV/AIDS or diabetes) are at greatest risk for developing severe disease.
- ❖ **If you think you have these symptoms or have any other medical questions, please consult your healthcare provider.**

## Help us detect WNV in LA County

### Dead Bird Surveillance

Report all dead birds to

- ❖ Los Angeles County Veterinary Public Health  
1-877-747-2243
- ❖ California Department of Health Services  
1-877-WNV-BIRD



*Sick or dead birds are an excellent indicator of the local presence of WNV. Although not all dead birds will be collected, your call is important to help the County, State and Local mosquito control and monitoring efforts.*

NOTE: Routine contact with birds (alive or dead) or other animals cannot transmit WNV to humans. Dead birds can be safely disposed of in the garbage by using gloves or a plastic bag to place the carcass into the garbage.

For more information visit [www.publichealth.lacounty.gov](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov) or call 800-232-4636 (English/Spanish)

## Local Mosquito and Vector Control Districts

Contact your local mosquito control agency for mosquito problems where you live or work:

- ❖ Antelope Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District  
([www.avmosquito.org](http://www.avmosquito.org)) 661-942-2917
- ❖ Compton Creek Mosquito Abatement District  
310-933-5321
- ❖ Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District  
([www.glacvcd.org](http://www.glacvcd.org)) 562-944-9656
- ❖ Los Angeles County West Vector Control District  
([www.lawestvector.org](http://www.lawestvector.org)) 310-915-7370
- ❖ San Gabriel Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District  
([www.sgvmosquito.org](http://www.sgvmosquito.org)) 626-814-9466
- ❖ Long Beach Vector Control Program 562-570-4132
- ❖ Pasadena Vector Control Program 626-744-6004



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