



What is the West Nile Virus?



The West Nile Virus is a virus that is commonly found in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The virus can affect humans, birds, horses, mosquitoes and some other mammals. The virus is transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito. The first detection of the virus occurring in the US was in New York in 1999. Since then it has been detected in 46 states as well as Canada and Mexico.

What are the symptoms?

NO SYMPTOMS:

- 80% of the people infected will not have any symptoms at all.

MILD SYMPTOMS:

- 20% of the people infected will have mild symptoms.
- Symptoms include: fever, headache, nausea, body aches, vomiting and sometimes swollen lymph glands and a skin rash on chest/stomach/back.
- Symptoms can last a few days to a few weeks.

SERIOUS SYMPTOMS:

- Only 1 out of 150 develop serious symptoms.
- Symptoms include: high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness and paralysis.
- Symptoms may last several weeks, and neurological effects may be permanent.

What precautions can be taken?

WHEN GOING OUTDOORS:

- Apply insect repellent with DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluidide).
- Cover exposed skin by wear long sleeve clothing, pants and socks.
- Be aware of peak mosquito hours (dusk & dawn).

AT YOUR HOME:

- Drain standing water.
- Repair and/or install screens.

YOUR COMMUNITY:

- Report dead birds online at <http://westnile.ca.gov>
- Become informed by checking out the above mentioned website as well as the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile>



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