

WEST NILE VIRUS Reportable Disease

CAUSE

West Nile Virus (WNV)

SYMPTOMS

No symptoms in most people. Most people (70-80%) who become infected with West Nile virus do not develop any symptoms.

Febrile illness in some people. About 1 in 5 people who are infected will develop a fever with other symptoms such as headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. Most people with this type of West Nile virus disease recover completely, but fatigue and weakness can last for weeks or months.

Severe symptoms in a few people. Less than 1% of people who are infected will develop a serious neurologic illness such as encephalitis or meningitis (inflammation of the brain or surrounding tissues).

SPREAD

WNV is passed to people by the bite of an infected mosquito. The mosquito gets infected with the virus after feeding on a bird infected with WNV. Not all mosquitoes transmit WNV. WNV is NOT spread from person-to-person.

INCUBATION

2 to 15 days

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD

There is no evidence that an individual infected with WNV can transmit the virus to others. However, if a mosquito bites a recently infected individual, the mosquito may become infected and capable of spreading the virus to other humans.

DIAGNOSIS

People who are not sick and do not have signs or symptoms of WNV are not advised to get tested. People with symptoms such as fever, headache, chills, swollen lymph nodes, rash and fatigue should contact their health care provider who will determine whether testing is needed. People who do not have health coverage can contact Contra Costa Health Services at 1-800-771-4270 to make an appointment and enroll in health coverage or visit one of the community clinics in their area: <http://cchealth.org/centers-clinics/>

TREATMENT

- No vaccine or specific antiviral treatments for West Nile virus infection are available.
- Over-the-counter pain relievers can be used to reduce fever and relieve some symptoms
- In severe cases, patients often need to be hospitalized to receive supportive treatment, such as intravenous fluids, pain medication, and nursing care.

PREVENTION/CONTROL

- Protect yourself from mosquito bites by using insect repellent containing one of these ingredients: DEET, Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, or IR3535 - Use according to manufacturer's label.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors.

- Limit the amount of time spent outdoors at dawn and dusk, or at other times when mosquitoes are active and particularly during mosquito season, May to October.
- Fix any holes in screens and make sure they are tightly attached to the doors and windows.
- Eliminate standing water from collecting on your property. Mosquitoes can breed in any puddle or standing water that lasts for more than four days.
- Dispose of, turn upside down, or regularly empty any metal cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots, and other water holding containers on your property. Pay special attention to discarded tires, a common place for mosquitoes to breed.
- Do not allow water to stagnate in birdbaths. Change it every three to four days.
- Clean clogged roof gutters of leaves and debris that prevent drainage of rainwater.
- Report neglected (green) swimming pools to Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control
- Aerate ornamental ponds or stock them with fish. Free mosquitofish can be obtained by calling Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control at 925-685-9301.

For more information please contact Contra Costa Public Health at 925-313-6740 and visit our website at <http://cchealth.org/westnile/>

More information also available here: <http://www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html> or <http://www.westnile.ca.gov/>.

For more information about mosquito prevention and control visit [Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control](http://www.contracostamosquito.com/) (<http://www.contracostamosquito.com/>) or call 925-771-6196.