## WHAT ARE MY CHANCES OF GETTING WEST NILE VIRUS?

**Most people bitten by a mosquito infected with West Nile Virus do not get sick.**

Studies done in New York after the 1999 epidemic showed that about three-fourths of the people with West Nile Virus did not become sick at all. About one-third had a mild illness with fever, headache, and body aches, sometimes also with swollen lymph glands and a skin rash. Only a few (1 percent) had the dangerous infection called encephalitis which causes headache, high fever, neck stiffness, confusion, coma, tremors, convulsions, paralysis, and, in some cases, death.

The time between the mosquito bite and a person becoming sick is usually 5 to 15 days. The very old, very young, and persons with compromised immune systems are at greatest risk of serious illness. There is no vaccine to prevent the disease, and intensive support therapy such as intravenous fluids and airway management are indicated for the seriously ill since there is no specific treatment.

**1 in 200 people who are infected will become seriously ill.**

⊗

**During an epidemic, 1 in 100 mosquitoes will be infected.**

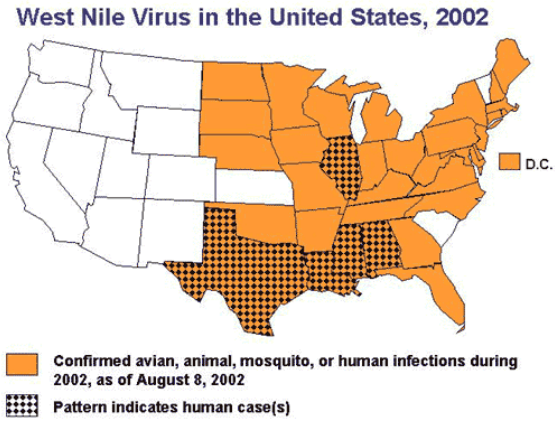
## WEB SITE INFORMATION

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**
www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm

**United States Geological Survey Surveillance Maps**
cindi.usgs.gov/hazard/event/west_nile/west_nile.html

**EPA Mosquito Control Program**
www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/skeeters.htm

**Brochure modified with the permission of the Office of Managing Risk and Public Safety, U. S. Department of the Interior.**

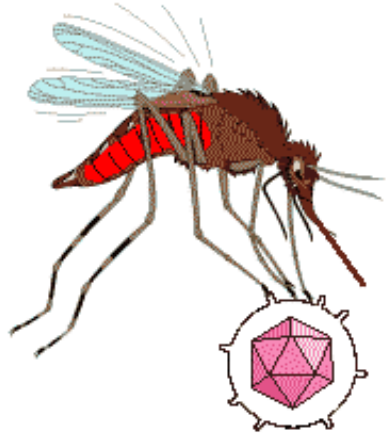



Source: Centers for Disease Control, August 2002.

**http://cindi.usgs.gov/hazard/event/west_nile/west_nile.html**

# *West Nile Virus*

## Protect Yourself



**Solid Waste Collection Services**
**City of Little Rock Public Works**
**10805 Ironton Cutoff Road**
**Little Rock, Arkansas**
**(501) 888-2208**

## WHAT IS WEST NILE VIRUS?

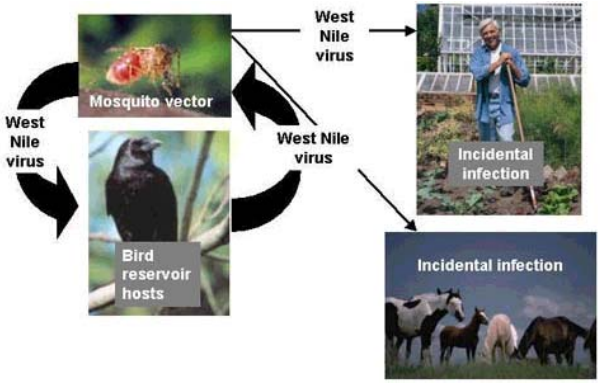
West Nile Virus is a mosquito-borne virus that can cause encephalitis (an inflammation of the brain) or meningitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain and spinal cord) in humans and other animals. It first appeared in the United States in September 1999, in New York City and is rapidly spreading westward. It is normally found in Africa, West Asia, and the Middle East. It is closely related to St. Louis encephalitis virus, a disease that is naturally found in the United States.

## HOW IS WEST NILE VIRUS SPREAD?

West Nile Virus is transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes get the virus by feeding on West Nile-infected birds. The mosquitoes then give the virus to humans and animals when they bite them.

The main mosquito species that carry West Nile Virus are Culex pipiens, in the North, and Culex quinquefasciatus, in the South.

## WEST NILE VIRUS TRANSMISSION CYCLE




These mosquitoes breed in stagnant water in rain barrels, tubs, catch basins, cesspools, ditches, ground pools, and other places where water stands for more than a week.

These mosquitoes are higher in numbers in late summer and tend to bite at night.

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Milder symptoms include:

- Slight fever
- Headache
- Body aches
- Swollen glands
- Sometimes a skin rash

Severe symptoms include:

- High fever
- Intense headache
- Stiff neck
- Confusion/disorientation

## HOW CAN I REDUCE MY RISK OF GETTING WEST NILE VIRUS?

West Nile virus is NOT passed from person to person. In other words, you cannot get sick from touching or kissing a person who has West Nile Virus, or from a health care worker who has treated someone with the disease. No one has caught the virus from handling live or dead birds with the virus. However, avoid picking up any dead animal with your bare hands. Use gloves or double plastic bags to collect the dead animal. To reduce the risk of becoming infected with West Nile Virus**:**

Stay indoors at dawn, dusk, and in the early evening. Make sure the screens on windows and doors are in good repair.

If you must be outdoors during these times, wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants to prevent being bitten by the mosquitoes.

Apply insect repellent sparingly to exposed skin. A good repellent will contain 20 percent to 30 percent DEET. Use 10% DEET concentration or less for children. Repellents may hurt the eyes and mouth, so do not put repellent on the hands of children. No insect repellents should be used on children under 3 years of age.

Spray clothing with repellents containing Permethrin or DEET, because mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing.

Because of their breeding habitats, the best way to control these mosquitoes is to **get rid of stagnant water** by:

Emptying containers that hold water for any period of time such as old tires, metal cans, ceramic pots, pet watering bowls, wading pools, pool covers, birdbaths, and saucers under potted plants.

Keeping ditches free of trash so that water will continue to flow.

Cleaning out leaves and other trash from gutters regularly to prevent standing water.

**Contact:**
**Solid Waste Collection Services at 888-2208 for:**

- Mosquito Spraying and/or
- Larvicide for Stagnant Water