



Prevention: Avoid Mosquito Bites to Avoid Infection

Human illness from West Nile virus is rare, even in areas where the virus has been reported. The chance that any one person is going to become ill from a mosquito bite is low. You can further reduce your chances of becoming ill by protecting yourself from mosquito bites.

To Avoid Mosquito Bites

- Apply insect repellent containing DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) to exposed skin whenever you are outdoors. Follow the directions on the product you are using in order to determine how frequently you need to reapply repellent. Sweating, perspiration or getting wet may mean that you need to re-apply repellent more frequently. If you are not being bitten, it is not necessary to re-apply repellent.
- When possible, wear long-sleeves, long pants and socks when outdoors. Treating clothes with repellents containing permethrin or DEET will give extra protection, since mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing. Do not apply repellents containing permethrin directly to skin. Do not spray repellent containing DEET on the skin under your clothing.
- The hours from dusk to dawn are peak mosquito biting times. Consider avoiding outdoor activities during these times -- or take *extra* care to use repellent and protective clothing during evening and early morning.

Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Limit the number of places around your home for mosquitoes to breed by getting rid of items that hold water. Help reduce the number of mosquitoes in areas outdoors where you work or play, by draining sources of standing water. In this way, you reduce the number of places mosquitoes can lay their eggs and breed.

To Reduce the Number of Mosquitoes

- At least once or twice a week, empty water from flower pots, pet food and water dishes, birdbaths, swimming pool covers, buckets, barrels, and cans.
- Check for clogged rain gutters and clean them out.
- Remove discarded tires, and other items that could collect water.
- Be sure to check for containers or trash in places that may be hard to see, such as under bushes or under your home.
- Check to see if there is an organized mosquito control program in your area. If no program exists, work with your local government officials to establish a program. The American Mosquito Control Association can provide advice, and their book *Organization for Mosquito Control* is a useful reference. Another source of information about pesticides and repellents is the National Pesticide Information Center, which also operates a toll-free information line: 1-800-858-7378.



The *Culex quinquefasciatus* mosquito is proven to be a vector associated with transmission of the West Nile Virus.

Clinician hotline 1 877-554-4225

Public inquiry 1 800-311-3435

CDC Website:

www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm