



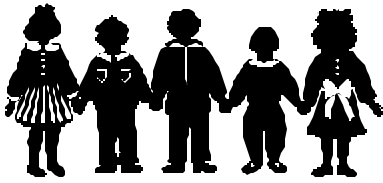
www.eWashtenaw.org

West Nile Virus and Children



West Nile Virus Facts

- ★ West Nile Virus (WNV) is spread when a mosquito bites an infected bird, and then bites a human.
- ★ WNV can be very serious, but it is important to remember that only a small percent of mosquitoes are infected. Most people who are bitten by an infected mosquito will experience no symptoms, or only a very mild illness.
- ★ WNV cannot be passed from one person to another. This means that contact such as touching, kissing, and caring for an infected person will not spread the disease.
- ★ Children, including infants, are **NOT** at a greater risk for becoming infected with WNV.



If a Child is Bitten by a Mosquito

- ★ First, remember that very few mosquitoes are infected with WNV, and that even fewer people actually become ill if they are infected.
- ★ Most people infected with the virus experience no illness or mild symptoms such as a slight fever, headache, body aches, a mild rash, or swollen lymph glands. Any symptoms will develop 3 - 15 days after infection.
- ★ Children who are bitten by a mosquito do not need to be tested for WNV. However, seek medical attention **immediately** if the child develops symptoms such as a high fever, confusion, muscle weakness, severe headaches, stiff neck, loss of consciousness, or if his or her eyes become sensitive to light. These more severe symptoms could be signs of encephalitis (swelling of the brain), or meningitis (swelling of the lining of the brain and spinal cord). These conditions can be very serious, and can possibly lead to death.

Prevention of Mosquito Bites

- ★ Since many mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water, it is important to remove any standing water in and around your home. Remember to include wheelbarrows, old tires, swimming pool covers, flower pots, etc. Also, make sure your rain gutters are free of leaves and debris, and change water in bird baths and pet dishes at least every other day.
- ★ Ensure that the screens on your house are intact, with no rips or tears.
- ★ Limit time outdoors around dusk and dawn, when mosquitoes are most active.
- ★ Wear protective clothing, such as long pants, loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts, and socks while outdoors near dusk or dawn, or while near tall grass or wooded areas.
- ★ Consider the use of an insect repellent, such as DEET, but be sure to follow these guidelines:
 - Store DEET out of the reach of children and read all instructions on the label before applying.
 - Do NOT apply DEET to children under 2 years of age.
 - Do NOT allow children to apply DEET themselves.
 - Do NOT apply DEET directly to children. Apply to your own hands and then put it on the child. When applying DEET, avoid the child's face and hands.
 - Avoid prolonged and excessive use of DEET. Use sparingly to cover exposed skin and clothing.
 - Do NOT apply DEET in enclosed areas.
 - Do NOT use on skin that is damaged by sunburn, cuts, bruises, or skin conditions such as psoriasis.
 - Wash treated skin and clothing after returning indoors.
 - If you believe you or a child is having an adverse reaction to a repellent containing DEET, wash the treated area immediately and contact your health care provider or local poison control center.
- ★ Note that vitamin B, ultrasonic devices, and incense have **not** been shown to be effective in preventing mosquito bites.

For more information, contact the Michigan West Nile Virus Hotline at 1-888-668-0869.