

West Nile Virus



Dickinson-Iron District Health Department

“Serving the community since 1936 in Health Protection, Health Education and Disease Prevention”

FACTS:

- West Nile virus (WNV) is a disease of birds that can cause illness in people when they are bitten by an infected mosquito. It was first detected in Michigan citizens in August of 2002.
- All residents of areas where West Nile virus activity has been identified are at risk of getting West Nile encephalitis or West Nile fever. In Michigan, the virus has been detected in 76 out of 83 upper and lower Michigan counties, making the virus endemic in the state.
- People over 50 years of age are found to be at the highest risk of developing severe disease. In addition, immunocompromised persons or people with underlying health conditions have an increased risk of developing more severe forms of WNV disease.
- The majority of people infected with West Nile virus will have no symptoms.
- An estimated 20% of those infected with West Nile virus will have mild flu-like symptoms including:
 - Fever
 - Fatigue
 - Headache
 - Body aches
 - Swollen lymph nodes
 - Body rash

Bats, Bugs and Bacteria Month

SERVICES AVAILABLE:

Dickinson-Iron District Health Department

(906) 779-7239 – EH Clerk

or

(906) 265-9913

www.didhd.org

Contact either your local health department or any of the following agencies for information on West Nile Virus in your county.

- [Regional MDA Offices](#)
- [MDEQ Water Division District Offices](#)
- [DNR Wildlife Field Offices](#)

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:

- Symptoms of West Nile virus usually last for only a few days, although severe disease symptoms may last weeks. Some neurological effects may be permanent.
- An estimated one in 150 people infected with West Nile virus will progress to a more severe infection called West Nile encephalitis/meningitis with symptoms including:
 - Stiff neck
 - Disorientation
 - Stupor
 - Tremors
 - Seizures or convulsions
 - Paralysis
 - Coma
 - Death

There are no commercially available human vaccines for the prevention of West Nile virus. Prevention of arboviral diseases like West Nile virus centers around controlling exposure to mosquitoes and avoiding mosquito bites.

These measures include:

- Reduce time outdoors, especially at dusk, during mosquito seasons
- Wear lightweight long sleeves and long pants if you are outdoors
- If outdoors, apply insect repellent exposed skin or clothing that contains the active ingredient, DEET. (Be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions)
- Maintain window and door screens to keep mosquitoes out of buildings
- Avoid standing water in the yard because they are potential mosquito breeding sites. Empty standing water from flower pot bases, pet bowls, clogged rain gutters, swimming pool covers, discarded tires, buckets, barrels, cans, etc.

RESOURCES:

Michigan Department of Community Health – West Nile Virus

<http://www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases/0,1607,7-186-25805---,00.html>

Michigan Department of Agriculture – Michigan West Nile Virus Site

http://www.michigan.gov/mda/0,1607,7-125-1566_2403_2424---,00.html

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,1607,7-125-1566_2310_8360---,00.html

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Fight the Bite!

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/>

