

What is West Nile Virus?

West Nile virus infection can cause serious disease. WNV is established as a seasonal epidemic in Northern Nevada that flares up in the summer and continues into the fall. This fact sheet contains important information that can help you recognize and prevent West Nile virus.

What are the symptoms of WNV?

Serious Symptoms in a Few People

About 1 in 150 people infected with WNV will develop severe illness. The severe symptoms can include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness and paralysis. These symptoms may last several weeks, and neurological effects may be permanent.

Milder Symptoms in Some People

Up to 20 percent of the people who become infected will have symptoms which can include fever, headache, body aches, nausea, vomiting, and sometimes swollen lymph glands or a skin rash on the chest, stomach and back. Symptoms can last for as short as a few days to as long as several weeks.

No Symptoms in Most People

Approximately 80 percent of people who are infected with WNV will not show any symptoms at all, but there is no way to know in advance if you will develop an illness or not

How does WNV spread?

Infected Mosquitoes

WNV is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds. Infected mosquitoes can then spread WNV to humans and other animals when they bite.

Transfusions, Transplants, and Mother-to-Child

In a very small number of cases, WNV also has been spread directly from an infected person through blood transfusions, organ transplants, breastfeeding and during pregnancy from mother to baby.

Not through touching

WNV is not spread through casual contact such as touching or kissing a person with the virus.

How soon do people get sick?

People typically develop symptoms between 3 and 14 days after they are bitten by the infected mosquito.





WEST NILE VIRUS (WNV) FACT SHEET

What can I do to prevent WNV?

The easiest and best way to avoid WNV is to prevent mosquito bites.

- When outdoors, use repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, some oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol. Follow the directions on the package.
- Many mosquitoes are most active from dusk to dawn. Be sure to use insect repellent and wear long sleeves and pants at these times or consider staying indoors during these hours.
- Make sure you have good screens on your windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out.
- Get rid of mosquito breeding sites by emptying standing water from flower pots, buckets and barrels. Change the water in pet dishes and replace the water in bird baths weekly. Drill holes in tire swings so water drains out. Keep children's wading pools empty and on their sides when they aren't being used.

What should I do if I think I have WNV?

Milder WNV illness improves on its own, and people do not need to seek medical attention for this infection though they may choose to do so. **If you develop symptoms of severe WNV illness, such as unusually severe headaches or confusion, seek medical attention immediately.** Severe WNV illness usually requires hospitalization. Pregnant women and nursing mothers are encouraged to talk to their doctor if they develop symptoms that could be WNV.

What is Carson City Health & Human Services doing about WNV?

Carson City Health & Human Services is working with other local, state, and federal agencies to help reduce the number of mosquitos in our region. Due to increased precipitation in 2017, Carson City and surrounding areas will likely see an increase in mosquito activity. It is important that we all work together to help prevent West Nile Virus infection.

For more information about West Nile Virus visit <http://www.cdc.gov/westnile> or contact Carson City Health & Human Services at (775) 887-2190 or cchhsinfo@carson.org.

4 WAYS TO PREVENT MOSQUITO BITES

-  1. Use an EPA-approved insect repellent. The active ingredient should be DEET, Picaridin, lemon or eucalyptus oil, or IR3535.
-  2. Wear protective clothing. If the weather permits, wear long sleeves, pants, and socks. Spray with insect repellent, because mosquitoes can bite through clothing.
-  3. Stay inside during peak feeding times. Different types of mosquitoes feed at different times. Learn what mosquitoes are in your area, and try to avoid going outdoors when they usually feed.
-  4. Keep doors and windows shut. Prevent mosquitoes from entering your home by keeping your doors and windows shut. Repair broken screens a use the air conditioner.

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a healthcare provider. If you have any questions about the disease described above, contact your primary care provider.