



Barry-Eaton District Health Department

Be Active • Be Safe • Be Healthy

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Summer Weather Is Back, and so Is West Nile Virus

Every year since 2001, Michigan communities have been affected by West Nile virus. This illness is most commonly caused by mosquito bites, which means that if someone lives in an area with mosquitos, they're at risk of getting the virus. Those who work or play outside are at the greatest risk. West Nile virus is not spread from person to person contact such as hugging, kissing, touching, or caring for someone with the virus.

Symptoms of West Nile virus occur three to fifteen days after becoming infected from a mosquito bite and include fever, headache, body aches, and sometimes skin rash and/or swollen glands. In some cases, the virus can cause encephalitis, or inflammation of the brain, which can be fatal or cause permanent damage. If anyone develops any of these symptoms, they should call their health care provider.

The risk of contracting West Nile virus can be lowered if individuals follow these preventative tips:

- Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents. Visit <https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/find-repellent-right-you> to see what repellents are EPA registered.
- Wear long sleeved shirts and pants. Dress children in long sleeved clothing as well.
- Use mosquito netting over strollers, cribs, beds, and when sleeping outside.
- Install screens, or repair holes in screens around one's home to keep mosquitos outside.
- Once a week, empty and scrub, turn over, cover, or throw out items that hold water, such as tires, buckets, planters, toys, pools, birdbaths, flowerpots, or trash containers. Mosquitoes lay eggs near water.

Dying or dead birds may indicate West Nile virus in your community, because they are carriers of the virus. If someone sees a dying or dead bird, they should report it to <https://secure1.state.mi.us/ORS/Survey/4>.

For more information on West Nile virus, individuals can visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website at <https://www.cdc.gov/westnile/> or the Barry-Eaton District Health Department's website at <https://www.barryeatonhealth.org/bats-ticks-mosquitoes-and-animal-bites>.