

Learn More About West Nile Virus

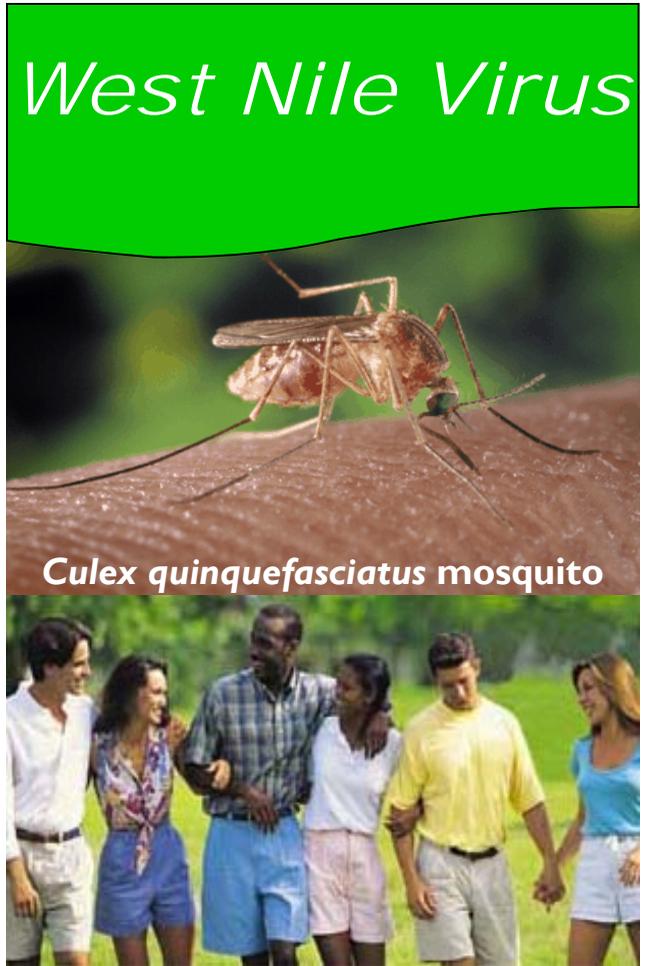
Talk to your doctor about any questions or concerns you may have.

Dallas County Health & Human Services Environmental Health Division
2377 N. Stemmons Freeway
Dallas, Texas 75207
(214) 819-2115
www.dallascounty.org/westnilevirus



Texas Department of State Health Services
1100 West 48th Street
Austin, Texas 78756
(512)458-7255
<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/>

National Resources:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
(888) 246-2675 (English)
(888) 246-2857 (Spanish)
(866) 874-2646 (TTY)
www.cdc.gov/westnile



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Zachary Thompson, Director

What is West Nile Virus?

It's one of a group of viruses spread by mosquito bites.

West Nile Virus (WNV) is a flavivirus historically found in Africa, West Asia, and the Middle East. It is closely related to St. Louis encephalitis virus found in the United States. The virus can infect humans, birds, mosquitoes, horses and some other animals.

West Nile Virus can cause mild to severe illness. Most people who get infected do not get sick. Some get a flu-like illness. In rarer cases, the virus can affect the brain and spinal cord and cause encephalitis, and can be fatal.

West Nile virus is cause for staying informed - not for panic. Learning about the virus and ways to prevent infection is key. Steps you take can help protect you from other mosquito-borne diseases, too.



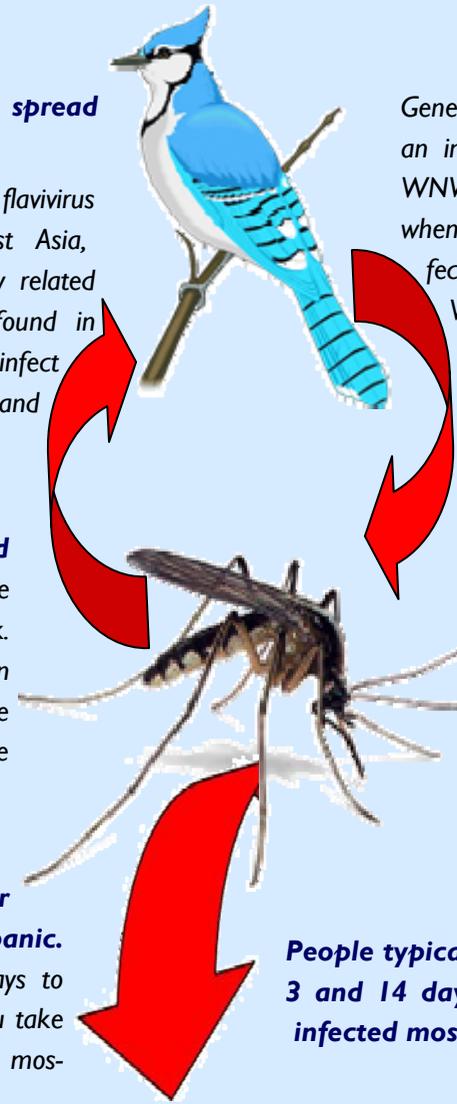
How Does WNV Spread?

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

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

In a very small number of cases, WNV has spread through blood transfusions, organ transplants, breastfeeding and even during pregnancy from mother to baby.

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



What are the Symptoms of WNV?



WNV can affect the central nervous system. The severity of symptoms can vary from person-to-person.

- **No Symptoms in Most People.**

Approximately 80% of people who are infected with West Nile Virus will not show any symptoms and will not know they have it.

- **Mild Infection in Some People.** Up to 20% of the people who become infected will display mild flu-like symptoms, including headache and body aches, nausea, vomiting, as well as swollen lymph glands, or a skin rash on the chest, stomach and back. Symptoms typically last a few days. This is known as **West Nile fever**.
- **Serious Infection in a Few People.** About one in 150 people infected with WNV will develop severe illness, such as **West Nile Encephalitis, West Nile Meningitis or West Nile Meningoencephalitis**. The symptoms can include headache as well as neck stiffness, confusion and high fever. These symptoms may last several weeks or even months. The neurological effects may be permanent.
- **WNV is known to cause death in rare circumstances.**

How is WNV Treated?

There is no specific treatment for WNV infection.

In mild cases, people experience symptoms such as fever and aches that go away on their own. In more severe cases, people may need to go to the hospital where they can receive supportive treatment including intravenous fluids, help with breathing and nursing care.



What Should I do if I think I have WNV?



If you think you may have West Nile Virus, see your doctor or health care provider as soon as possible. They will be able to run the tests needed to diagnose and treat your condition.

Mild WNV illness often improves on its own. If you develop symptoms of the more severe form of WNV illness, such as unusually severe headaches or confusion, seek medical attention immediately.

What is Dallas County Doing?

Dallas County uses an **Integrated Mosquito Management** program to control the mosquito population. **IMM** uses various techniques that include the following tools:

Surveillance

The collection of mosquitoes to determine the location, species, quantity and virus potential.



Source Reduction

Investigate and remove water sources that support mosquito breeding habitats.

Larvicide

The use of mosquitofish or EPA-approved products to kill mosquito larvae in standing water.

Adulticide

The spraying of EPA-approved products from trucks and planes to reduce mosquito populations.

Public Awareness

Informing the public by press releases, public information campaigns, websites, pamphlets and presentations.

Personal Protection

Changing personal habits to reduce mosquito bites. This means **YOU** and how you can protect yourself, your family and community.

SLAP back mosquitoes!

What Can I Do? Mosquito Proof

Remember the Best Offense is a Good **D**-fense

Dress



- Wear long, loose and light-colored clothing outside.

Deet

All Day, Every Day



- Whenever you're outside, use insect repellants that contain DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus.

Drain



- Remove all areas of standing water in and around your home.
- Change water in wading pools, pet dishes and birdbaths several times per week.

Dusk & Dawn



- Stay indoors during dusk and dawn hours when mosquitoes are most active.