



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

Jim Doyle, Governor
Karen E. Timberlake, Secretary



For Immediate Release

August 8, 2008

**A Joint Release from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and the
Dodge County Human Services and Health Department**

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First Human Case of West Nile Virus Reported

Protect Yourself Against Mosquito Bites

State and local health officials are advising residents to protect themselves against mosquito bites as they announce the first confirmed human case of West Nile virus this year in Wisconsin, an adult male from Dodge County.

The chances of a person contracting WNV are very low and most people infected with West Nile virus will not have any symptoms. Those who do become ill may develop a fever, headache, and rash that lasts a few days. Symptoms may begin between three to 15 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. In rare cases, WNV can cause severe disease with symptoms such as muscle weakness, stiff neck, disorientation, tremors, convulsions, paralysis and coma. Older adults and people with compromised immune systems are at an increased risk of severe disease from the virus.

There is no specific treatment for West Nile virus other than to treat symptoms. If you think you have West Nile virus infection, contact your healthcare provider.

WNV is spread to people through the bite of an infected mosquito. Although few mosquitoes actually carry the virus, tips to minimize your exposure include:

- Avoid being outside during times of high mosquito activity, specifically dawn and dusk
- Use effective mosquito repellent and apply according to the label instructions
- Keep window screens repaired so mosquitoes cannot enter your home
- Dispose of discarded tires, cans or other containers left outside that may contain standing water
- Turn over wading pools, hot tub covers, wheel barrows, boats and canoes when not in use
- Keep drains, ditches and culverts clean of trash and weeds so water will drain properly
- Clean gutters and downspouts to ensure they drain properly
- Change the water in bird baths, pet dishes and wading pools every 3-4 days
- Trim tall grass, weeds and vines since mosquitoes use these places to rest during hot daylight hours
- Landscape to prevent water from pooling in low-lying areas

In 2007, 12 Wisconsin residents developed WNV infection. So far this year, West Nile virus has been found in 11 birds and one horse in ten Wisconsin counties. Local health departments and the Department of Health Services will continue surveillance for West Nile virus until the end of the mosquito season. To help with the surveillance effort, residents should report sick or dead crows and blue jays to the Dead Bird Hotline at 1-800-433-1610.

For more information regarding West Nile virus, go to <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/communicable/westNilevirus/>

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