WEST NILE VIRUS: 
Avoid Mosquito Bites to Avoid Infection

The West Nile Virus can cause illness and sometimes fatal encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) in people, horses, many types of birds, and possibly other animals. It spreads through the bites of infected mosquitoes.

HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF AGAINST WEST NILE VIRUS?

- When outdoors, wear a mosquito repellent containing 20 - 80% Deet for Adults and no more than 10% for children. Do not use repellent containing DEET on children under 3 years of age – REMEMBER, READ AND FOLLOW THE MANUFACTURER’S DIRECTIONS FOR USE FOUND ON THE CONTAINER.
- Only adults should apply repellent on a child.
- Spray repellent on your hands and then apply to your face.
- Only apply repellent to exposed skin and clothing.
- After returning indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water.
- Do not use repellent under clothing.
- Wash treated clothing before wearing it again.
- Do not apply repellent over cuts, wounds, sunburn, or irritated skin.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and pants when outdoors for long periods of time.
- Avoid perfumes and colognes when outdoors for extended periods of time.

HOW CAN I REDUCE THE NUMBER OF MOSQUITOES AROUND MY HOME AND NEIGHBORHOOD?

Mosquitoes breed in standing water. Even a small bucket that has stagnant water in it for seven days can become home to up to 1,000 mosquitoes.

- Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, and ceramic posts that have accumulated on your property. Do not overlook containers that have become overgrown by aquatic vegetation.
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers that are left outside.
- Clean clogged roof gutters on an annual basis, particularly if the leaves from surrounding tress tend to plug up the drains. Roof gutters are easily overlooked, but can produce millions of mosquitoes each season.
- Turn over plastic wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use.
- Do not allow water to stagnate in birdbaths.
- Aerate ornamental pools or stock them with fish.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools that are not being used. A swimming pool left unattended for a month by a family on vacation can produce enough mosquitoes to result in neighborhood-wide complaints. Be aware that mosquitoes may even breed in the water that collects on swimming pool covers.

Most human West Nile virus infections cause either no symptoms or a mild flu-like illness. The most severely affected patients may develop an inflammation of the brain, or the membranes of the brain or spinal cord, or both, called encephalitis, meningitis, or meningoencephalitis, respectively. These severe cases may be fatal. Persons over age 50 are at higher risk of severe illness following infection.