



Lincoln County Health Department

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WEST NILE VIRUS CASES UP THIS YEAR

Take steps to protect yourself and your family

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are urging people to take steps to prevent West Nile Virus infections. Outbreaks of West Nile Virus occur each summer in the United States. This year, some areas of the country are experiencing earlier and abundant activity.

There has been one reported case of West Nile Virus in North Carolina which resulted in death. According to the CDC, so far in 2012, over 40 states have reported West Nile Virus infections in people, birds, or mosquitoes. A total of over 1,000 cases of West Nile Virus, including more than 40 deaths, have been reported by CDC. This is the highest number of cases reported since the virus was first detected in the United States in 1999. Over 80 percent of the cases have been reported from six states, Texas, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Louisiana, South Dakota, and California.

West Nile Virus is transmitted to people by infected mosquitoes. In the United States, most people are infected from June through September, and the number of these infections usually peaks in mid-August. Seasonal outbreaks often occur in local areas that can vary from year to year. Many factors impact when and where outbreaks occur, such as weather, number of mosquitoes that spread the virus, and human behavior

The best way to prevent West Nile Virus is to avoid mosquito bites:

- Use insect repellents when you go outdoors.
- Wear long sleeves and pants during dawn and dusk.
- Install or repair screens on windows and doors. Use air conditioning, if you have it.
- Empty any standing water from items outside of your home such as flowerpots, buckets, and kiddie pools. This will reduce the number of places mosquitoes can lay their eggs and breed.

Approximately 1 in 5 people who are infected with West Nile Virus will develop symptoms such as fever, headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. Less than 1 percent will develop a serious neurologic illness such as encephalitis or meningitis (inflammation of the brain or surrounding tissues). About 10 percent of people who develop neurologic infection due to West Nile virus will die. People over 50 years of age and those with certain medical conditions, such as cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, kidney disease, and organ transplants, are at greater risk for serious illness.

There are no medications to treat, or vaccines to prevent, West Nile Virus infection. People with milder illnesses typically recover on their own, although symptoms may last for several weeks. In more severe cases, patients often need to be hospitalized to receive supportive treatment,

MISSION STATEMENT

The Lincoln County Health Department provides quality health services to promote a healthy community.

VISION STATEMENT

Lincoln County Health Department services will promote healthy lifestyles through prevention, preparedness, and education.

such as intravenous (IV) fluids, pain medication, and nursing care. Anyone who has symptoms that cause concern should contact a health care provider.