



What is West Nile Virus Infection? It is an illness that is spread to people by the bite of a mosquito that was infected with the West Nile virus. The mosquito gets this disease by feeding on infected birds. To date, almost every American state has evidence of West Nile Virus.

What are the symptoms of this kind of virus infection? Most people who are infected with the West Nile virus do not become ill. It takes 3 - 15 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito for symptoms to appear.

Mild infections include:

- Fever
- Headache, eye pain
- Muscle aches, joint pain, swollen nodes
- Rash on the trunk

Severe infections include:

- Extreme muscle weakness
- Inflammation of the brain (encephalitis)
- Paralysis, coma

How do you reduce your risks of getting West Nile Virus?

1. Take measures to prevent mosquito bites such as wearing protective clothing (long pants, loose-fitting long-sleeved shirts & socks.)
2. Consider using an insect repellent containing DEET.
3. Make sure that doors and windows have tightly fitting screens
4. Reduce mosquito breeding places such as standing water that collects on your property; remove discarded tires; change the water in bird baths every 3-4 days and turn over plastic wading pools when not in use.

What kinds of birds are susceptible to West Nile Virus? Some wild birds such as crows and blue jays are susceptible to West Nile Virus and become ill and die when infected with this disease. However, other types of birds, including sparrows and penguins could be infected.

What do I do if I find a dead bird? Put on rubber gloves, or insert your hand in a clean plastic bag; pick up the bird with the bagged hand, invert the bag over the bird and seal the bag. Throw the bag in your garbage can. Call the Health Department or the West Nile Virus Hotline to report the location of the bird.

TO REPORT DEAD BIRDS OR FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Cudahy Health Department (769-2239 X 300)

OR

The West Nile Virus Hotline (1-800-433-1610)