

DOE – Medical and Infectious Disease Update – Wednesday, October 29, 2003

DOE weekly updates on SARS, West Nile Virus, or other illnesses will continue as appropriate or as requested. The following information is current as of Thursday, October 30, 2003, 0700 hours, EDT. Information presented is routinely taken from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), <http://www.cdc.gov/>, The World Health Organization (WHO), <http://www.who.int/en/>, the Department of Defense Global Emerging Infections Surveillance and Response System site, (DoD-GEIS)-<http://www.geis.ha.osd.mil/>, and other credible sources.

PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR LOVED ONES—GET A FLU SHOT!

Recent news

Daily Aspirin May Raise Cancer Risk for Women, Reuters, Tuesday, October 28, 2003 ... Women who take an aspirin a day -- which millions do to prevent heart attack and stroke as well as to treat headaches -- may raise their risk of getting deadly pancreatic cancer, U.S. researchers said yesterday ... The study of 88,000 nurses found that those who took two or more aspirin tablets a week for 20 years or more had a 58 percent higher risk of pancreatic cancer than those who did not ... <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A26233-2003Oct27.html>

Minister launches flu fight: Ontarians offered free vaccinations-Program to cost province \$44 million, Oct. 28, 2003, By THERESA BOYLE, *QUEEN'S PARK BUREAU*, The province's new health minister says that in the SARS era, it's more important than ever for Ontarians to get a flu shot ... "It's especially important to get a flu shot to be sure that we can distinguish between symptoms of flu and other similar diseases like SARS," George Smitherman told a news conference yesterday at the Toronto Board of Trade where he helped launch the city's "Let's Beat the Flu" program ... "... they can get a flu shot. And in so doing, they can make sure that at a time when our health resources are necessary for challenges, that we don't have them plugged up with people that could have prevented it," he said.

http://www.thestar.com/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?pagename=thestar/Layout/Article_Type1&c=Article&cid=1067296209386&call_pageid=968332188774&col=968350116467

Clusters of Influenza Infections Identified; Reports Underscore Importance of Timely Influenza Vaccination, Distributed via the CDC Health Alert Network, October 20, 2003, During the first week of October, Texas health authorities reported cases and school outbreaks of laboratory-confirmed influenza A infections in the Houston metropolitan area ... <http://www.geis.ha.osd.mil/GEIS/IDNews/FluDrift.asp>

Childhood chickenpox can come back much later as painful disease shingles, Canadian Press, *Tuesday*, October 28, 2003, EDMONTON (CP) - Viewers who tune in to David Letterman will still occasionally hear the television talk show host joke about his case of shingles, but it's no laughing matter for those diagnosed with the painful, rashy disease. "It hurt so much I was Michael Jackson-crazy," Letterman said when he returned to work after spending March and part of February on sick leave. Prime Minister Jean Chretien also had shingles on his stomach last spring and was reported to be in severe pain, although he kept working. Shingles affects about one in five people, and other sufferers also describe it as a terrible ordeal ... http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_14446.html

CDC West Nile Virus Home Page - <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm>

Three Ways to Reduce your West Nile Virus Risk:

[Avoid Mosquito Bites](#); [Mosquito-Proof Your Home](#); [Help Your Community](#)

CDC West Nile Virus Statistics, Surveillance, and Control

[Maps and Data](#) | [Surveillance Program](#) | [Guidelines](#) | [Case Definition](#) | [See Also](#)

CDC West Nile Virus Case Count - [Maps](#) reporting WNV activity and [human disease cases](#) reported to CDC have been updated each **Wednesday, until this week**. **With the winter approaching, last week's update was hopefully the last for this season, especially since this illness was responsible for over 7000 cases and 400 plus deaths.** <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/surv&controlCaseCount03.htm>

West Nile Virus Interactive Map – If you go to this site, each State will be 'HOT', and moving your mouse on a State will link you to its Health Department's West Nile web site and bring up other information. Where the CDC map and case summary is a lagging indicator, this map, linked to each State's Health Department, provides real-time information for those states which update regularly, such as PA and CO. http://www.mosquitoczar.com/west_nile_virus.

[West Nile Virus Home](#) > State and Local Government Sites - http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/city_states.htm

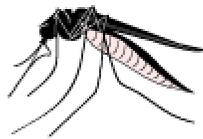
Links to State and Local Government West Nile Virus Web Sites

Click on a state to link directly to their West Nile virus Web page.
See list below for additional city-level and main State Health Department Web sites.



[U.S. Geological Survey - http://westnilemaps.usgs.gov/](http://westnilemaps.usgs.gov/)

West Nile Virus Maps - 2003



[2002 West Nile Maps \(CINDI Website\)](#)

The following links provide other information on the West Nile Virus:

[USGS West Nile Virus Page](#); [USGS National Wildlife Health Center, Madison, Wisconsin](#); [USGS National Biological Information](#)

[Infrastructure West Nile Virus Page](#)

West Nile Virus: What You Need To Know

CDC Factsheet - http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/wnv_factSheet.htm

What Is West Nile Virus?

West Nile virus (WNV) is a potentially serious illness. Experts believe WNV is established as a

seasonal epidemic in North America that flares up in the summer and continues into the fall. This fact sheet contains important information that can help you recognize and prevent West Nile virus.

What Are the Symptoms of WNV?

WNV affects the central nervous system. Symptoms vary.

- **No Symptoms in Most People.** Approximately 80 percent of people who are infected with WNV will not show any symptoms at all.
- **Mild Symptoms in Some People.** Up to 20 percent of the people who become infected will display mild symptoms, including fever, headache, and body aches, nausea, vomiting, and sometimes swollen lymph glands or a skin rash on the chest, stomach and back. Symptoms typically last a few days.
- **Serious Symptoms in a Few People.** About one in 150 people infected with WNV will develop severe illness. The severe symptoms can include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness, and paralysis. These symptoms may last several weeks, and neurological effects may be permanent.

How Does It Spread?

- **Infected Mosquitoes.** 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.
- **Transfusions, Transplants, and Mother-to-Child.** In a very small number of cases, WNV also has spread through blood transfusions, organ transplants, breastfeeding and even during pregnancy from mother to baby.
- **Not through touching.** WNV is not spread through casual contact such as touching or kissing a person with the virus.

How Soon Do Infected People Get Sick?

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

How Is WNV Infection Treated?

There is no specific treatment for WNV infection. In cases with mild symptoms, people experience symptoms such as fever and aches that pass on their own. In more severe cases, people usually 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?

Mild WNV illness improves on its own, and people do not necessarily need to seek medical attention for this infection. If you develop symptoms of severe WNV illness, such as unusually severe headaches or confusion, seek medical attention immediately. Severe WNV illness usually requires hospitalization. Pregnant women and nursing mothers are encouraged to talk to their doctor if they develop symptoms that could be WNV.

What Is the Risk of Catching WNV?

For most, risk is low. Less than 1 percent of people who are bitten by mosquitoes develop any symptoms of the disease and relatively few mosquitoes actually carry WNV.

Greater risk for those outdoors a lot. People who spend a lot of time outdoors are more likely to be bitten by an infected mosquito. They should take special care to avoid mosquito bites.

People over 50 can get sicker. People over the age of 50 are more likely to develop serious symptoms of WNV if they do get sick and should take special care to avoid mosquito bites.

Risk through medical procedures is low. The risk of getting WNV through blood transfusions and organ transplants is very small, and should not prevent people who need surgery from having it. If you have concerns, talk to your doctor before surgery.

Pregnancy and nursing do not increase risk of becoming infected with WNV.

What Can I Do to Prevent WNV?

The easiest and best way to avoid WNV is to prevent mosquito bites.

- When you are outdoors, use insect repellents containing DEET (N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide). Follow the directions on the package.
- Many mosquitoes are most active at dusk and dawn. Consider staying indoors during these times or use insect repellent and wear long sleeves and pants. Light-colored clothing can help you see mosquitoes that land on you.
- Make sure you have good screens on your windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out.
- Get rid of mosquito breeding sites by emptying standing water from flower pots, buckets and barrels. Change the water in pet dishes and replace the water in bird baths weekly. Drill drainage holes in tire swings so water drains out. Keep children's wading pools empty and on their sides when they aren't being used.

What Is the CDC Doing About WNV?

CDC is working with state and local health departments, the Food and Drug Administration and other government agencies, as well as private industry, to prepare for and prevent new cases of WNV.

Some things CDC is doing include:

- Coordinating a nation-wide electronic database where states share information about WNV
- Helping states develop and carry out improved mosquito prevention and control programs
- Developing better, faster tests to detect and diagnose WNV
- Creating new education tools and programs for the media, the public, and health professionals
- Opening new testing laboratories for WNV

What Else Should I Know?

If you find a dead bird: Don't handle the body with your bare hands. Contact your local health department for instructions on reporting and disposing of the body.

**For more information call the CDC public response hotline
at (888) 246-2675 (English), (888) 246-2857 (Español), or (866) 874-2646 (TTY)**

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