

# West Nile Virus

## ***What is the West Nile Virus?***

West Nile Virus is often transmitted by mosquitoes and ticks. Experts believe that WNV is a seasonal epidemic in North America, from summer and continues into fall. The virus affects people, birds, horses and other animals. West Nile Virus illness is known to be very serious and even fatal.

## ***How is it spread?***

In most cases West Nile Virus is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds. Humans or animals can be infected when bitten by these infected mosquitoes or ticks

## ***Who is at risk?***

The risk varies by age. The risk of getting West Nile Virus is very low; however, anyone can be infected. Experts believe that people over 50 years of age and children who are immune-compromised have the highest risk of serious illness.

## ***What are the symptoms?***

Most people who are infected with WNV will not get sick. About 1 in 5 people infected will have mild symptoms such as fever, headache, and body aches. Serious cases may include high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, paralysis, and coma. If you have any of these symptoms, contact your health care provider.

## ***How can I protect myself?***

No human vaccine against West Nile Virus has been developed. The best way to protect yourself and your family is to avoid mosquito bites and eliminate mosquito breeding habitat around your home. Wear loose clothing that covers the body and apply insect repellent, especially if you're outside at dawn or sunset from spring to fall.

## **Protect yourself and your family by:**

- ❖ Always apply mosquito repellent before spending time in outdoor areas where mosquitoes are plentiful.
- ❖ Avoid mosquito-infested areas altogether in early evening when mosquitoes are especially active.

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Your ponds are in your care take care of them. The City is not obligated to treat any ponds, streams, lakes, wetland areas or any types of bodies of water with pesticides. To find out what the City is planning to do, contact Ruth Famurewa SWM / NPDES Coordinator at 206-870-6869 or email [rfamurewa@desmoineswa.gov](mailto:rfamurewa@desmoineswa.gov)

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To learn more about West Nile Virus in Washington States visit Department of Health at <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/westnile/> or contact King County West Nile Virus Hotline at 206-205-3883