

Epi Watch

Volume 2, Issue 10

October 2008

Disease of the Month: West Nile Virus

What is West Nile Virus?

West Nile virus (WNV) is one of a family of viruses that can be transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito.

If an infected mosquito bites me, how long until symptoms develop?

Most people bitten by infected mosquitoes do not develop any symptoms. However, when symptoms of infection do occur, they usually appear 3 to 14 days after they are bitten by the infected mosquito.

How is WNV transmitted?

- * Most often WNV is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds.
- * In a very small number of cases, WNV also has spread through blood transfusions, organ transplants, breast feeding, and even during pregnancy from mother to baby.

WNV is not spread through casual contact such as touching or

kissing a person with the virus.

If I live in an area with birds and mosquitoes with WNV, can I get it? It is highly unlikely.

- * Less than 1% of mosquitoes are infected with the virus.
- * Only about 1 in 5 people who are bitten by an infected mosquito experience illness.
- * Chances of severe illness are extremely small.

What are the symptoms?

Most people (about 4 out of 5) who are infected with WNV will not show any symptoms at all. Some persons experience mild symptoms. This happens to about 1 out of 5 persons. These symptoms include:

- * Fever,
- * Headache / body aches / fatigue,
- * Nausea or vomiting, and
- * Sometimes swollen lymph glands or a skin rash on the chest, stomach or back.

Symptoms can last for as short as a few days or in some cases for

several weeks.

About 1 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 last forever.

Who is most at risk for WNV?

All residents of areas where virus activity has been identified are at risk of getting West Nile virus although people over 50 years of age should be careful as they have a higher risk of developing serious symptoms of WNV if they do get sick.



Special Points of Interest

Did you know?

About 1 in 150 people infected with WNV will develop serious illness and may require hospitalization.

TIPS: Preventing West Nile Virus

The best way to stay healthy and not get West Nile virus is by following these easy tips:

- * Stay indoors at dawn, dusk, and in the early evening.
- * Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors.
- * Avoid shaded areas where mosquitoes may be resting.
- * Use insect repellent containing 20-30% DEET for individuals 2 months and older. For babies under 2 months use mosquito netting over

baby carrier. Using more DEET than necessary will not improve protection but may cause adverse reactions.

- * Get rid of mosquito breeding sites by emptying standing water from birdbaths, boats, buckets, tires, unused pool, pool covers, roof gutters, and other containers. Change the water in pet dishes and replace the water in birdbaths weekly. Keep children's wading pools empty



and on their sides when they are not being used.

- * Make sure you have

good screens on your windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out.

- * Report mosquito concerns to your local mosquito control agency: [918-595-4219](tel:918-595-4219)

Inside this issue:

Disease of the Month: West Nile Virus	1
Tips: Preventing West Nile Virus	1
Special Points of Interest	1
Current News: Update: Northeast Oklahoma Gastrointestinal Illness Outbreak	2
Reported Cases of Selected Diseases	2
Surveillance Report	2

CURRENT NEWS

Update on the Northeast Oklahoma Gastrointestinal Illness Outbreak

In August of 2008, the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) and local public health officials began investigating an outbreak of diarrheal illness in northeastern Oklahoma. This outbreak was identified as *E. coli* O111.

As of September 16, 2008, OSDH confirmed at least 314 persons became ill as a result of the outbreak. Of that number, 246 were adults, 65 were children, and the ages of three cases were not yet identified. At least 72 persons have been hospitalized including 17 who received dialysis treatment and one person died. OSDH has interviewed 1,843 persons as part of the outbreak investigation. All known cases had association with the Country Cottage restaurant in Locust Grove, OK.

Health investigators are reviewing results of interviews with persons who ate at the Country Cottage to determine the possible association of illness to specific food items. This analysis could take several weeks.

For more information visit the OSDH website at www.ok.gov/health

The Tulsa Health Department collects Emergency Room chief complaint data to monitor the emergence of illnesses, such as influenza, in our community. For additional information on THD's county-wide surveillance system go to www.tulsabiowatch.com

REPORTED CASES OF SELECTED DISEASES

Disease	Tulsa County		Oklahoma	
	Cases Reported Year-to-Date 2008	Cases Reported Year-to-Date 2007	Cases Reported Year-to-Date 2008	Cases Reported Year-to-Date 2007
<i>Campylobacter</i>	37	34	332	437
<i>E. coli</i> O157:H7	4	1	20	19
<i>Giardia</i>	19	13	113	138
<i>Hepatitis A</i>	1	4	7	10
<i>Hepatitis B</i> (acute & chronic)	18	43	110	192
<i>Hepatitis C</i> (acute & past/present)	182	313	871	1832
<i>Rabies (Animal)</i>	0	1	32	70
<i>Salmonella</i>	84	59	632	525
<i>Shigella</i>	29	10	125	107

As of January 2008, OSDH is no longer reporting to counties for investigation Hepatitis C cases for individuals over the age of 40 years old. Discrepancies between state and county numbers may result from cases being reported directly to the county. Also, Tulsa County totals for Hepatitis B includes perinatal cases.

Surveillance Report

