

Tulsa Health Department

West Nile Virus

West Nile virus is a flu-like virus that can be spread through infected mosquitoes. Anyone living in an area where West Nile virus is present in mosquitoes can get infected; however, most people who become infected with West Nile virus do not develop any symptoms. When symptoms do occur they usually appear 3 to 14 days after you are bitten by an infected mosquito. The symptoms include sudden onset of fever, headache, dizziness, and muscle weakness. Long-lasting complications can include difficulty concentrating, migraine headaches, extreme muscle weakness and tremors, and paralysis. Contact your health care provider if you develop these symptoms after suffering mosquito bites within the previous two weeks. For current case information on West Nile virus in the United States, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html>.

Mosquito Surveillance Program

The Tulsa Health Department operates a mosquito surveillance program using special mosquito traps throughout Tulsa County to test for West Nile virus in the community. THD also works to control mosquito populations during warm months, typically May through September, using a spray program. You may see the spraying trucks in your neighborhood. However, it's important to remember that Tulsa County residents are the first line of defense against mosquitoes.

Call the mosquito hotline to place a complaint about mosquitoes in your area or visit www.tulsa-health.org to submit an online Environmental Complaint Form. More information regarding mosquito control and protection is also available on the THD website.

Mosquito Hotline 918-595-4219

Prevent Mosquito Bites

You can reduce your risk of being infected with West Nile virus by using insect repellent and wearing protective clothing to prevent mosquito bites.

- *Use insect repellents when you go outdoors.* Repellents containing DEET provide longer-lasting protection. To optimize safety and effectiveness, repellents should be used according to the label instructions.
- *When weather permits, wear long sleeves, long pants, and socks when outdoors.* Mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing, so spray clothes with an approved repellent to provide extra protection. Mosquitoes are attracted to dark colors so wearing light colored clothing may help prevent bites.
- *Take extra care during peak mosquito biting hours.* Take extra care to use repellent and protective clothing from dusk to dawn or consider avoiding outdoor activities during these times.

Mosquito-Proof Your Home

The best protection against West Nile virus is to prevent mosquitoes in your area! Mosquitoes need standing water in which to breed, so it's important to make every effort to remove standing water in the area where you live. You can help reduce the mosquito population by following this checklist:

- Dump out all standing water. This includes tires, flower pots, toys, bird baths, buckets, etc.
- Keep swimming pools clean and free of stagnant water.
- Change the water in birdbaths and flower pots at least two times per week.
- Clean clogged gutters and downspouts.
- Refresh your pet's water bowl daily.
- Eliminate tall grass, weeds, vegetation and other mosquito resting places.
- Fill in holes or eliminate the water sources where mosquitoes may be breeding.
- Encourage neighbors to eliminate mosquito breeding and resting sites on their property.
- Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens in good repair.
- Screen rain barrels, openings to water tanks and any other water storage containers.