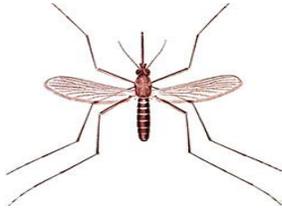


Mosquito-Borne Illnesses



Mosquitoes are more than an annoyance spoiling our outdoor activities by trying to bite us, they are also a vector for the spread of illness. Outbreaks of viruses, including Zika and West Nile, are being spread by mosquitoes. This means our best defense against these illnesses is to combat mosquitoes.

What is Zika?

Zika virus causes an illness that is usually mild with symptoms lasting from several days to a week. Severe disease requiring hospitalization is uncommon, but there is increasing evidence of birth defects in newborns. Zika virus is transmitted to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito. These mosquitoes are aggressive daytime biters, who live indoors and outdoors near people. The mosquitoes become infected when they feed on a person already infected with the virus. Sexual transmission of Zika virus can also occur and is of particular concern during pregnancy.

What is the West Nile Virus?

West Nile encephalitis is an infection of the brain caused by West Nile virus, a flavivirus commonly found in Africa, West Asia and the Middle East. It is closely related to St. Louis encephalitis virus found in the United States. People become infected when bitten by mosquitoes that feed on infected birds. The virus is located in the mosquito's salivary glands. During blood feeding, the virus may be injected into the animal or human, where it may multiply, possibly causing illness.

What can be done to prevent outbreaks of Mosquito-Borne Illnesses?

For prevention and protection, residents should apply the four D's:

- **Dusk and dawn** are the times of day residents should try to stay indoors. This is when mosquitoes are most active.
- **Dress** in light colored long-sleeve shirts and long pants when outside. For extra protection, think about spraying thin clothing with repellent.

- **DEET** - Use insect repellent containing DEET. Always use a repellent when outdoors. Follow product instructions, especially when using repellents on children.
- **Drain** standing water in and around the house and in neighborhood areas where mosquitoes can breed. Mosquitoes may develop in any water that sits stagnant for three to seven days.

If you have standing water that is unable to drain, treat them with "mosquito dunks" that kill the larvae for up to 30 days. A single dunk can cover 100 square feet of water. These are available in packs of 6 from many stores with home & garden sections.

How do I remove the source of mosquitoes?

Decrease your chances of infection by taking action in the following ways:

- Get rid of old tires, tin cans, bottles, buckets, drums and other containers in your yard or keep them empty of standing water
- Empty wading pools frequently and store them indoors when not in use
- Repair leaky pipes and outside faucets
- Replace your outdoor lights with yellow "bug" lights.
- Change water in bird baths and scrub them twice a week
- If you have outside pets, empty their watering dishes daily
- Clean clogged roof gutters and drain flat roofs
- Treat standing water that can't be drained with *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti), available at most home and garden stores
- Make sure window and door screens are "bug tight"
- Whenever possible, remain indoors at dusk and dawn, when mosquitoes are most active.

- When outdoors, wear protective clothing or use insect repellent with the active ingredient DEET to avoid exposure to mosquitoes. Always read instructions before using insect repellent or other chemicals.

What should a citizen do if they find a dead bird they believe may be infected?

You may dispose of the bird by wearing gloves, placing the bird in a plastic bag and throwing it in the garbage.