



LOGAN COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Public Health
Prevent - Promote - Protect

Press Release

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT URGES YOU TO “FIGHT THE BITE”

With the onset of warmer weather, mosquitoes are now becoming more active. This increased activity means that people are at risk for becoming infected with West Nile Virus (WNV). West Nile encephalitis is an infection of the brain caused by the WNV which is transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito.

In addition to WNV, mosquitoes also carry the virus capable of transmitting other forms of encephalitis such as Lacrosse and St. Louis. The Zika virus has also been reported but is still considered a low risk for transmission from mosquito to human since the primary mosquito that carries the virus is not found in Illinois. For further details regarding Zika virus and how it can be transmitted, you can refer the Logan County Department of Public Health (LCDPH) website. The department will continue to monitor activity as it relates to the WNV, Zika virus and all mosquito-related infections.

Avoiding mosquitoes and eliminating breeding sites are prime methods of prevention. To reduce the risks of becoming infected by mosquitoes, it pays to “fight the bite” by taking the following precautions:

- Avoid the outdoors when mosquitoes are most active, especially between dusk and dawn.

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- When outdoors, wear shoes, socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Mosquitoes are attracted to dark colors so light-colored clothing is preferred.
- Apply insect repellent which includes DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus. Contact a physician before using repellents on infants and always follow the label instructions.
- Eliminate ways for mosquitoes to gain entry into your home. Be sure screens that protect doors and windows are tight-fitting, free of tears and are in good repair.
- Eliminate all sources of standing water that can support mosquito breeding such as flower pots, clogged gutters, old tires, unused wading pools and other receptacles. Bird bath water should be replaced weekly.
- To report public tire dump sites, abandoned pools, areas of standing water in roadside ditches, flooded yards or similar conditions which may produce mosquitoes, you can contact your local municipality or the LCDPH.

If you are bitten by a mosquito, there is no reason to be tested for WNV since illness related to mosquito bites are rare. However, if you develop symptoms such as high fever, confusion, muscle weakness or severe headaches, you should see your doctor.

Due to the lack of a State budget in Illinois, the LCDPH will not be able to collect and ship dead birds to test for WNV until funding is available through the Illinois Department of Public Health. If or when the program begins, the public will be notified of the details and instructed on how to report a dead bird.

If you have questions regarding prevention of mosquito-related diseases or would like more information, you can contact the Logan County Department of Public Health at 217-735-2317 or visit the health department website at WWW.LCDPH.ORG.

Information Source: IL Dept. of Public Health

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