



Press Release

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LCDPH WEST NILE VIRUS MONITORING PROGRAM

With warm weather upon us, mosquitoes will become active thus increasing the threat of mosquito-related diseases such as 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 Logan County Department of Public Health would like to remind everyone to take precautions to eliminate breeding areas around your home and to avoid mosquito bites.

Precautions to prevent mosquitoes include the following:

- Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are most active, especially between dusk and dawn. Use prevention methods whenever mosquitoes are present.
- When outdoors, wear shoes and socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. It's preferable to wear light-colored clothing. Apply insect repellent that includes DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus and use according to label instructions. Contact a physician before using repellents on infants.
- Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that might have tears or other openings. Try to keep doors and windows shut, especially at night.
- Eliminate all sources of standing water that can support mosquito breeding, including water in bird baths, ponds, flowerpots, wading pools, old tires and other receptacles. Contact your local municipal government or the Logan County Department of Public Health to report areas of stagnant water in roadside ditches, flooded yards and similar locations that may produce mosquitoes.

If you are bitten by a mosquito, there is no reason to be tested for WNV since illnesses 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.

LCDPH will be trapping and testing mosquitoes throughout Logan County to detect WNV activity during much of the summer. Monitoring for WNV includes the collection and submittal of dead birds for testing at the Illinois State Laboratory. To assist in this process, LCDPH is seeking the public's help.

If you observe a dead or dying bird, please contact LCDPH to see if the bird is eligible for testing. Eligible birds must meet various conditions and can include crows, blue jays, robins and other perching birds which appear to have died of natural causes within the previous 24 hours. Birds showing signs of decomposition are not eligible.

For additional information regarding WNV and mosquito prevention, you can contact LCDPH at 217-735-2317 or you can log on to the health department website at WWW.LCDPH.ORG.

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