



HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATE CONTACT: East Side Mosquito Abatement
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FIRST HUMAN WEST NILE VIRUS CONFIRMED IN STANISLAUS COUNTY

Stanislaus County - A 53-year-old female and a 64-year-old male are the first confirmed human West Nile Virus (WNV) infections in Stanislaus County this year, announced Dr. Julie Vaishampayan, Public Health Officer for Stanislaus County. Both were diagnosed with neurologic disease.

WNV is most commonly transmitted to people and animals through the bite of a mosquito infected with the virus. Hot weather, abandoned swimming pools and standing water create ideal conditions for the development of mosquitoes and the subsequent spread of the virus.

Most people who are infected with WNV will not experience any illness. About one in five people will develop West Nile Fever with symptoms of headache, fever and fatigue. However, some people -- less than one percent -- will develop serious neurologic illness such as encephalitis or meningitis.

People 50 years of age and older have a higher chance of getting sick and are more likely to develop serious illness when infected with WNV. Studies also indicate that those with diabetes and/or hypertension are at greatest risk for serious illness. "It is very important that people take precautions to protect themselves and their families from mosquito bites," advises Dr. Vaishampayan.

Public Health recommends that individuals prevent exposure to mosquito bites and WNV by following the "Four Ds":

1. DEET – Apply insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR 3535 according to label instructions to keep mosquitoes from biting you. Apply repellents only to exposed skin and/or clothing. DEET can be used safely on infants and children two (2) months of age and older.
2. DAWN AND DUSK – Mosquitoes that carry WNV tend to bite in the early morning and evening so it is important to wear repellent at this time. Make sure that your doors and windows have tight-fitting screens to keep out mosquitoes. Repair or replace screens with tears or holes.
3. DRESS – Wear clothing that reduces the risk of skin exposure to mosquito bites (i.e., long pants and long-sleeved shirts).

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4. DRAIN – Mosquitoes lay their eggs on standing water. Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property, including flower pots, old car tires, rain gutters and pet bowls. If you have a pond, use mosquito fish or commercially available products to eliminate mosquito larvae. Neglected swimming pools are also prime place for mosquito breeding. The East Side and Turlock Mosquito Abatement Districts are available to help with neglected pools in the prevention of mosquito development. To request District service, call 209-522-4098 East Side and 209-634-1234 for Turlock or visit the District website at <http://www.eastsidemosquito.com/> or <http://www.turlockmosquito.org/>

Resources for Additional Information on West Nile Virus are:

- Stanislaus County Public Health website, <http://www.schsa.org/PublicHealth/>
- California Department of Public Health WNV website, www.westnile.ca.gov. This website includes the latest information on WNV activity in the state.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html>

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