

How can I protect my family from West Nile Virus?

To decrease exposure to mosquitoes and pathogens they may carry:

- Avoid outside activity at dawn and dusk during the mosquito season (May to October). This is particularly important for elderly and small children.
- Wear long pants and long sleeve shirts when outside.
- Use approved mosquito repellent, with no more than 35% DEET for adults and less than 10% for children. Be sure to read and follow the manufacturer's - directions for use.
- Place mosquito netting over infant carriers when outdoors with babies.
- Make sure that doors and windows have tight fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes in them.
- Drain all standing water on property.
- Stock ornamental ponds with fish that eat mosquito larvae. Call the CVMVCD for free delivery.

Which Animals Get West Nile Virus?

An infected mosquito can bite any animal, but not all animals will become infected. The virus most often affects birds, but occasionally causes disease in other animals as well.

Birds

Wild birds are the animals from which the mosquito vector primarily acquires the virus. Infection has been reported in more than 110 bird species. Although many birds that are infected with WN virus will not appear ill, WN virus infection can cause serious illness and death in some birds. The most severe illnesses are seen among the corvid birds, which include crows, jays, ravens, and magpies. American crows constitute the majority of birds reported dead due to WN virus.

Horses

Horses are also susceptible to WN virus. The disease does not seem to be specific to a particular breed or age of horse. Clinical signs of disease consist of central nervous system abnormalities similar to those caused by infection with eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) and western equine encephalitis (WEE). EEE and WEE vaccines are available for horses and are recommended for use in the spring. An equine WN virus vaccine recently became available for horses.