

## What is the West Nile virus?

- It is a virus transmitted by mosquito bites to humans and animals such as birds and horses.
- Only mosquitoes can transmit the virus.



## What are the symptoms?

After exposure, illness usually occurs in 3-15 days. Illness may be mild to severe. Most people may not feel sick at all. A very few may develop more severe symptom of the illness. People 50 years of age and older are more likely to develop serious disease.

The symptoms are:

- Mild to high fever (may last 3-6 days)
- Headache
- Stiff neck
- Muscle aches

## How is the West Nile virus Spread?

- From the bite of infected mosquitos.
- You cannot catch it from another person.
- You cannot catch it from animals.

## How can you avoid getting the West Nile virus?

- Avoid places where there are a lot of mosquitoes.
- Stay inside at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are more active.

### When you will be around mosquitoes:

- Apply repellent to exposed skin that contains "DEET" or Picaridin.
- Be careful to follow product directions, especially for children.
- Insect repellent with Permethrin may be used on clothing, shoes, bed nets and camping gear, but NOT on skin.
- Wear long-sleeve shirts, long pants, socks, and shoes.
- Make sure that the windows and screen doors are in good condition.
- If mosquitoes get inside your house, use a fly swatter instead of an insect spray.

- Replace outdoor lights with yellow "bug" Lights.

### ALSO....

### Stop breeding mosquitos in your back yard.

#### Mosquitoes need water to breed.

- Change the water in birdbaths at least weekly.
- Clean rain gutters so they drain properly.
- Cover or empty wading pools when they are not in use.



**Avoid having open containers outside your home that may collect water such as; cans, old tires, buckets, empty flowerpots and unused watering troughs.**

## What else?



If you notice an unusual number of dead birds (especially crows, blue jays or magpies) in your area notify your County or State Health Department.

- Do not handle carcasses with bare hands, Use gloves or a shovel.
- If you worry about your horse getting infected, consult your vet. Ask about a vaccine for horses.



## Remember...

- Notify your Health Department if you suspect you may have West Nile virus or you notice an unusual number of dead birds (especially crows, blue jays or magpies) in your area.
- Insect sprays are generally not recommended and if used, must be

applied according to manufacturer's instructions.

If you have any questions about West Nile virus, call the:

Polk County Public Health Information Line  
(503)-623-8176 (24 hours a day)  
or  
Public Health at (503) 623-8175

If you have questions about mosquito control or dead birds:

Call Environmental Health (503) 623-9237 or Public Health  
(503) 623-8175

Visit the Centers for Disease Control web site for more information:

[www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile)  
or  
Polk County Web site at:  
[www.co.polk.or.us](http://www.co.polk.or.us)  
And click on  
West Nile virus information

Pamphlet developed by Marion County in cooperation with OHSU- School of Nursing.

**Polk County Public Health Dept.**  
182 SW Academy St., STE 302  
Dallas, OR 97338  
(503) 623-8175

**Information line – 503-623-8176**

6/2006-West Nile virus

## Avoid the West

### Nile virus



CALL THE POLK COUNTY PUBLIC  
HEALTH INFORMATION LINE

24 HOURS A DAY (English and Spanish)  
FOR THE MOST CURRENT WEST NILE  
VIRUS INFORMATION:

INFORMATION ON WEST NILE VIRUS IN  
HUMANS  
AND

WEST NILE VIRUS IN HORSES, PETS  
AND BIRD TESTING

**503-623-8176**