

Personal Precautions Against Mosquitoes

What can I do to reduce my risk of becoming infected with West Nile virus?

- From April to October, when mosquitoes are most active, take the following precautions:
- If outside during evening, nighttime and dawn hours when mosquitoes are most active and likely to bite, children and adults should wear protective clothing such as long pants, long-sleeved shirts and socks.
- If outside during evening, nighttime and dawn hours, consider the use of an insect repellent containing 10% or less DEET (N, N-diethyl-methyl-meta-toluamide) for children and no more than 30% DEET for adults.
- **USE DEET ACCORDING TO MANUFACTURER'S DIRECTIONS**
 - Do not use DEET on infants or pregnant women
 - Do not allow young children to apply DEET themselves.
 - Do not apply DEET directly to children. Apply to our own hands and then put it on the child.
 - DEET is effective for approximately four hours. Avoid prolonged or excessive use of DEET. Use sparingly to cover exposed skin and clothing.
 - Wash all treated skin and clothing after returning indoors.
 - Store DEET out of reach of children.
 - Vitamin B, ultrasonic devices, incense and bug zappers have not been shown to be effective in preventing mosquito bites.
- More information on mosquito repellents is available in a technical article for physicians at the American College of Physicians website: Mark S. Fradin, MD. Mosquitoes and mosquito repellents: A Clinicians guide. Annals of Internal Medicine, June 1, 1998. 128:931-940.

What can I do around my home to help reduce exposure to mosquitoes?

- Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Weeds, tall grass and bushes provide an outdoor home for the adult Culex Pipiens mosquito (the common house mosquito), which is most commonly associated with the West Nile virus. Mosquitoes can enter homes through unscreened windows or doors, or broken screens. Here are some steps that you can take:
- Make sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace all screens in your home that have tears or holes.
- Remove all discarded tires from your property. The used tire has become the most important domestic mosquito producer in this country.
- Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots, or similar water holding containers. Do not overlook containers that have become overgrown by aquatic vegetation.
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers that are left out of doors. Drainage holes that are located on the side collect enough water for mosquitoes to breed in.
- Make sure roof gutters drain properly. Clean clogged gutters in the spring and fall.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, outdoor saunas and hot tubs. If not in use, keep empty and covered.

- Drain water from pool covers.
- Aerate ornamental pools or stock them with fish. Water gardens are fashionable but become major mosquito producers if they are allowed to stagnate.
- Turn over wheelbarrows and change water in birdbaths at least twice weekly. Both provide breeding habitat for domestic mosquitoes.
- Turn over plastic wading pools when not in use.
- Eliminate any standing water that collects on your property. Use landscaping as needed. Mosquitoes will develop in any puddle that lasts more than 4 days.
- Remind or help neighbors to eliminate breeding sites on their properties.

For further information call Concord Health Services at 225-8580 or the State of NH Bureau of Communicable Disease Control at 866-273-6453.