



Mono County Health and Human Services

West Nile Virus Infection - First Human Case in the Eastern Sierra

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Date: August 21, 2006 11:20 AM

The Mono County Health Department has been informed that a Mono County resident has been diagnosed with a West Nile Virus (WNV) infection. The north County resident became sick approximately three weeks ago, was hospitalized in Nevada, and has been released home to continue to recover. This marks the first human case of West Nile Virus infection ever to be identified in the Eastern Sierra.

For the last several years, the presence of the virus has been demonstrated in Inyo, Mono, and Alpine Counties through the testing of mosquitoes, chickens, horses, and birds. This year, positive birds and mosquitoes have been identified in Inyo County only, but not from Mono or Alpine Counties. Conditions which cause high risk for humans are high concentrations of the right kinds of mosquitoes, along with high numbers of the right kinds of birds, all living in close proximity with high numbers of humans. Given our unique geography, distinct microclimates, and low human population density, the risk to humans is considered low.

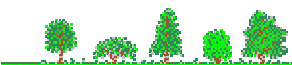
After the bite of an infected mosquito, humans may become sick after 2 to 14 days. However, 80% of individuals who become infected do not develop any symptoms. Those that do may develop rash, fever, muscle aches, weakness, headache, or swollen lymph glands. Older individuals, and those with underlying medical conditions such as high blood pressure and diabetes, are more vulnerable. They get more severe illness, and take a longer time to recover. There is no specific treatment except general supportive care. €

This year has been relatively quiet, as far as West Nile Virus infections go, throughout the United States. There have been 388 cases reported from 26 states, with the highest numbers from Idaho, Texas, Mississippi, Nevada, Colorado, and California. In California, there have been 68 human cases reported from 46 counties, with one death. This is significantly less than at the same time last year.

To protect yourself and your family and neighbors, remember to:

1. clear your property of any standing water, such as in old tires, bird baths, livestock feeding troughs, and pools
2. wear long sleeves and long pants in mosquito prone areas
3. use mosquito repellent according to the instructions
4. avoid outdoor activities at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active

5. repair window screens that provide entry points
6. make sure that your horses are currently vaccinated
7. report dead birds to the hot line at 1-877-WNV-BIRD, seven days a week.



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