



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



EEE Virus Detected in Mosquitoes

EEE/West Nile Virus Information Line: 800-913-1139



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BURLINGTON – There are few guarantees in life, but you can be sure that mosquitoes will attend all July 4th festivities in Vermont. Anybody celebrating at outdoor parades, cookouts and fireworks can supply a delicious meal to a hungry mosquito.

These tiny pests are mostly an annoyance, but certain types of mosquitoes can spread viral diseases. During the past few summers, mosquitoes carrying Eastern Equine Encephalitis virus (EEE) and West Nile virus (WNV) have been found in Vermont.

EEE virus has already been detected this year in one batch of mosquitoes collected in the town of Grand Isle. The mosquitoes were trapped on June 17 making this the earliest detection of the virus in the Northeast. This is also the first time EEE virus has been detected in Grand Isle County, although two horses from Franklin County and a batch of mosquitoes in Milton tested positive for the virus in 2013. So far this year, more than 300 batches of mosquitoes have been tested with just one positive result.



“This reminds us that although the mosquitoes have been biting for weeks, the risk for getting sick starts to increase right about now,” said Erica Berl, an infectious disease epidemiologist.

Both WNV and EEE virus have been detected in many of Vermont’s counties. The Health Department encourages Vermonters to take simple precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

No Matter Where You Live – Enjoy the Outdoors, but Fight the Bite!

- Weather permitting, wear long sleeves and pants and avoid outdoor activities at dusk and dawn – when mosquitoes are most active.
- Reduce mosquito breeding habitats by getting rid of standing water. Drain areas where water can pool: rain gutters, wading pools and any other water-holding containers such as old tires.
- If you are outside when mosquitoes are biting, use an effective insect repellent. Choose repellents that have an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registration number on the label. This indicates that the product has been evaluated for safety and effectiveness. Repellents that contain no more than 30 percent DEET are safe and effective for children and adults. When using insect repellent, always follow the directions on the label. EPA has a tool that will help you search for a repellent that is right for you – Go to epa.gov, use the A-Z listing to find ‘**Insect Repellents**’ or review [this](#).
- Install or repair screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out.
- Protect your animals. Horses are susceptible to WNV and EEE infection, and there are effective vaccines available. Llamas, alpacas and emus are also susceptible and can be immunized with the horse vaccine.
- Contact your health care provider if you have questions about your health or need medical attention.

Symptoms of WNV and EEE

Most people who are infected with WNV will not become ill, and this may be true for EEE as well. Those who become ill with either WNV or EEE may have flu-like symptoms such as fever, chills, fatigue, joint and body aches. Symptoms

typically last one or two weeks, and recovery can be complete. However, both viruses have the potential to invade the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord) and cause more serious illness. Symptoms of severe disease include fever, intense headache, weakness, poor coordination, irritability, drowsiness and mental status changes. About one-third of people who develop severe EEE disease will die, and many who recover are left with disabilities. Fortunately, severe EEE is rare.

EEE/WNV Information Line

The Health Department is offering a WNV/EEE information line to answer questions from the public. The phone line – 800-913-1139 – will be operational from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

For more information on West Nile Virus and EEE and to view EEE risk maps (showing towns with active mosquito surveillance and to find out the latest surveillance results) visit the Vermont Department of Health's website at healthvermont.gov.

For more information about mosquitoes, visit:

http://agriculture.vermont.gov/plant_pest/mosquitoes_ticks/mosquitoes

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