



Monroe County Health Department

Monroe County, Indiana

Health Department Public Health Clinic

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West Nile Virus Found in Mosquitoes in Monroe County

BLOOMINGTON – The Monroe County Health Department confirms that one sample from one pool of mosquitoes (up to 100 mosquitoes are collected per pool) has tested positive for West Nile Virus in Monroe County. The sample was collected by the Monroe County Health Department as part of its General Environmental Mosquito Surveillance Program.

Environmental Health Director Michael Kuzemka states that, "Mosquitoes are most active at dawn and dusk. Any size container holding water, even the size of a bottle cap, could be a breeding area for mosquitoes on your property. Keeping yards mowed will help reduce the mosquito population."

A person who is bitten by an infected mosquito may show symptoms 3 to 15 days after the bite. **Most people who become infected with West Nile Virus will have either no symptoms or mild symptoms, including fever, headache, body aches, or rash.** However, about 1 in 150 individuals who are infected will have a more severe form of the disease, with symptoms such as encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) or meningitis (inflammation of the tissues that cover the brain and spinal cord). Health officials say that individuals over age 50 are at higher risk for serious illness. West Nile Virus is fatal in about 10% of those who develop severe disease.

There is no specific treatment for West Nile Virus, and no vaccine is available for humans. In severe cases, intensive supportive therapy including intravenous fluids, airway management, respiratory support, prevention of secondary infections (pneumonia, urinary tract, etc.) and good nursing care are recommended.

Individuals who develop any of the following symptoms should see a doctor immediately:

- High fever
- Severe headache
- Neck stiffness
- Muscle weakness or paralysis
- Nausea or vomiting
- Sore joints
- Confusion

The Monroe County Health Department recommends community members take steps to prevent mosquito breeding around their homes and workplaces:

- Discard old tires, tin cans, ceramic pots or other containers that can hold stagnant water.
- Repair failed septic systems.
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers left outdoors.
- Clean clogged roof gutters, particularly if leaves tend to plug up the drains.
- Keep grass cut short and shrubbery trimmed.
- Flush ornamental fountains and birdbaths periodically.
- Aerate ornamental pools or stock them with predatory fish.
- Frequently replace the water in outdoor pet bowls.
- Install or repair screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out of the home.

To protect yourself from mosquito bites when outdoors:

- Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are active (especially late afternoon, dusk to dawn and early morning).
- Apply an EPA-registered insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol to clothes and exposed skin.
- Cover exposed skin by wearing a hat, long sleeves and long pants in places where mosquitoes are especially active, such as wooded areas.

For more information on West Nile Virus and other mosquito-borne diseases, visit <https://www.in.gov/health/idepd/zoonotic-and-vectorborne-epidemiology-entomology/vector-borne-diseases/mosquito-borne-diseases/>

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