West Nile virus is a risk you *can* do something about.

West Nile virus is now in most of the United States.

The most important way people become infected is through the bite of an infected mosquito. You can reduce your chance of getting infected by **avoiding mosquito bites**.

Adults are at highest risk.

People over age 50 and people who have ever received a solid organ transplant are more likely to develop serious symptoms of West Nile virus if they do get sick and should take special care to avoid mosquito bites.

What happens if I get infected?

A small number of people (about 1 in 150) who get infected with West Nile virus develop severe disease, called West Nile encephalitis or West Nile meningitis (inflammation of the brain or the area around the brain). Symptoms of severe illness include headache, high fever, stiff neck, mental confusion, muscle weakness, tremors (shaking), convulsions, coma, and paralysis. These symptoms may last several weeks, and neurological effects may be permanent. **See your health care provider** if you develop these symptoms.

Some people who become infected have symptoms such as fever, headache, body aches, nausea, vomiting, swollen lymph glands or a skin rash on the chest, stomach and back. Symptoms can last for a few days to several weeks. **Call your health care provider** if you have questions about your symptoms.

Most people who get infected with West Nile virus do not have any symptoms. There is no specific treatment for West Nile virus infection. There is no vaccine available for people.

for more information

www.cdc.gov/westnile

800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)

in English, en Español

Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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Three steps you can take to reduce your risk…

1 Avoid mosquito bites!

Apply insect repellent on exposed skin and clothing when you go outdoors. Use an EPA-registered insect repellent such as those containing DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus. Permethrin sprayed on clothing provides protection through several washes. Products with a higher percentage of DEET as active ingredient generally give longer protection. *Don't spray repellent on skin under clothing. Don't use permethrin on skin.*

For details on when and how to apply repellent, see **www.cdc.gov/westnile**, and look for **Insect Repellent Use and Safety** in the **Questions and Answers** pages.

Cover up! Wearing long sleeve shirts, long pants and socks sprayed with repellent while outdoors can further help prevent mosquito bites.

Avoid mosquitoes! Many mosquitoes bite between dusk and dawn. Limit time outdoors during these hours, or be especially sure to use repellents and protective clothing.

2 Mosquito-proof your home!

Screens: Keep mosquitoes outside by fixing or installing window and door screens.

Drain standing water. Don't give mosquitoes a place to breed. A small amount of standing water can be enough for a mosquito to lay her eggs.

Look around every week for possible mosquito breeding places. Empty water from buckets, cans, pool covers, flower pots and other items. Throw away or cover up stored tires and other items that aren't being used. Clean pet water bowls weekly. Check if rain gutters are clogged. If you store water outside or have a well, make sure it's covered up. Encourage your neighbors to do the same.

3 Help your community!

Dead birds help health departments track West Nile virus. **Check with your local or state health department** to find out their policy for reporting dead birds.