

News Release

August 19, 2019

Health Department Confirms Human Case of West Nile Virus

ST. GEORGE, UT –The Southwest Utah Public Health Department (SWUPHD) is confirming a human case of West Nile virus (WNV) in Washington County.

“West Nile virus was recently detected in mosquitoes here,” said Dr. David Blodgett, SWUPHD Director and Health Officer, “We encourage residents to be vigilant in protecting themselves from mosquito bites to prevent further infections.”

While West Nile virus is transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito, not all mosquitoes carry the virus. The mosquitoes that carry the virus are typically active from dusk to dawn. When you’re outdoors during those times, it’s important to follow these guidelines:

- Use mosquito repellent containing DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus. Follow package directions when applying.
- Wear long sleeved shirts and pants.

Follow these additional guidelines during mosquito season to minimize exposure;

- Remove any puddles or standing water around your home where mosquitoes can breed, including birdbaths, swimming/wading pools, old tires, buckets, and plant containers.
- Keep roof gutters clear of debris.
- Keep weeds and tall grass cut short.
- Ensure door and window screens are in good condition so mosquitoes cannot get inside.

While most people infected by this virus won't notice any symptoms, some people may experience flu-like symptoms or worse. The elderly and people with poor immune systems are at higher risk for symptomatic disease. The most serious cases can lead to hospitalization, disability, or death. Symptoms of the severe form of West Nile virus include: high fever, severe headache, stiff neck, disorientation, and confusion. If you are experiencing symptoms of West Nile virus, please contact your healthcare provider.

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