

The Arizona Program

The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) has overseen a statewide mosquito-borne encephalitis surveillance program since 1974 for Western Equine Encephalitis (WEE), St. Louis encephalitis (SLE), and other viruses.

In 2000, ADHS and other agencies expanded the program to enhance the ability to detect West Nile virus. A protocol to report and test dead birds was added to the existing surveillance system.

Currently, the West Nile virus surveillance program in Arizona consists of:

- ✓ Human case investigation
- ✓ Mosquito trapping and testing
- ✓ Sentinel chicken flocks
- ✓ Dead bird testing
- ✓ Testing of horses with West Nile virus symptoms

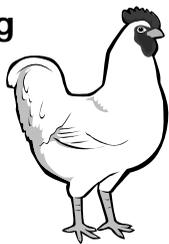
Mosquito Testing

Mosquitoes throughout the state are sampled for the presence of WN, WEE, and SLE viruses. Local mosquito and vector control agencies also monitor the abundance and type of mosquitoes.



Sentinel Chicken Testing

Approximately 15 chicken flocks are strategically placed throughout the state and are tested routinely during the mosquito season to detect evidence of infection from WN, WEE, or SLE viruses.



Dead Bird Surveillance

Arizona began to test dead crows and related birds for WN virus in 2000. State agencies, private organizations, and individuals participate in the surveillance program by reporting dead bird sightings.

WHAT DO I DO IF I SEE A DEAD BIRD?

If you find a dead bird, please call your local health department promptly. Do not touch the bird with bare hands! Health officials will provide additional instructions on how to submit birds for WNV testing, when appropriate. Dead birds must be reasonably fresh to be tested. Pigeons, doves, chickens and baby birds will not be tested for West Nile virus as they are not good sentinels for this virus.

To report dead birds call Pinal County Environmental Health
(520) 866-6200
 or
(866) 287-0209
 Ext. 6200

PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY

To decrease exposure to mosquitoes and the infections they may carry:

Avoid outside activity at dawn and dusk during the mosquito season. This is particularly important for the elderly and small children.

Wear protective clothing (long pants and long sleeves) and apply insect repellent when outside.

Make sure that doors and windows have tight fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes in them.

Drain all standing water on private property and stock permanent pond with fish that eat mosquito larvae.

Change water in flower pots, bird baths and pet dishes located outdoors at least twice per week.

Close septic tanks tightly. Make sure that the clean-out plug or inspection hatch is not open even a crack.

Environmental Health

Mosquito Hotline

(520) 866-6200

or

(866) 287-0209

Ext. 6200



Arizona

WEST NILE VIRUS SURVEILLANCE AND FACTS

For general information on West Nile Virus call the State Public Health Hotline

(602) 364-4500 Metro Phx.

or

(800) 314-9243 Statewide

Websites:

westnileaz.com

pinalcounty.org/EnvHealth/WNV

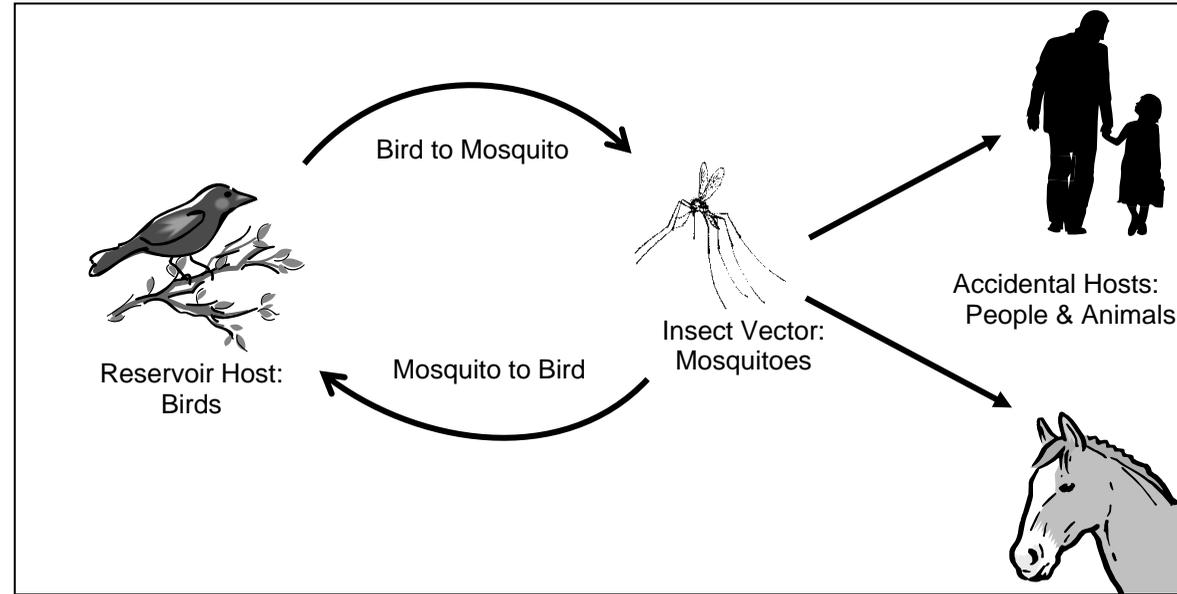
WHAT IS WEST NILE VIRUS?

West Nile (WN) virus is a mosquito-borne virus that was first detected in the United States (U.S.) in 1999. The majority of people and animals that are infected with the virus have a mild illness or no symptoms. In rare cases, the virus can cause a more serious condition called encephalitis, an inflammation of the brain.

HOW DO PEOPLE AND ANIMALS GET WEST NILE VIRUS?

WN virus is transmitted to people and animals by infected mosquitoes. Only certain species of mosquitoes carry the virus and very few mosquitoes are actually infected. A mosquito first acquires the infection by feeding on a bird with virus in its blood. The virus lives in the mosquito and is transmitted through the mosquito's saliva when it bites a person or animal.

Humans and horses are accidental hosts for WN virus. Human-to-human transmission does not occur. The virus is most prevalent from May through October when mosquitoes are most abundant



WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF WEST NILE VIRUS IN PEOPLE?

Some people who are infected with West Nile virus have no symptoms whatsoever. However, of those who become ill, symptoms can include fever, headache, nausea, body aches, mild skin rash. In a few cases, the disease will progress to encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). For more information on human infection from WNV, visit the Centers for Disease Control website at: www.cdc.gov

The time between the mosquito bite and the onset of illness, known as the incubation period, ranges from 3 – 15 days in humans. There is no specific treatment for infection with West Nile virus, although supportive care is important.

WHICH ANIMALS CAN BE INFECTED WITH WEST NILE VIRUS?

An infected mosquito can bite any animal, but not all animals will become infected. The disease most often affects birds, horses and humans.



Birds

Wild birds are the animals from which the mosquito acquires the virus. Infection has been reported in more than 200 bird species. West Nile virus infection can cause serious illness and death in some bird species, while others may not be affected. The most severe illnesses are seen among crows, jays, ravens, magpies and some raptors. American Crows constitute the majority of birds reported dead in the Eastern U.S. due to West Nile virus.



Horses

Horses are also susceptible to WN virus. The disease does not seem to be specific to a particular breed or age of horse. Clinical signs of the disease consist of central nervous system abnormalities. Equine vaccine for West Nile virus is now available. Contact your large animal veterinarian for vaccine recommendations.