



Media Advisory

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Wayne County Health Division Reports First West Nile Virus-Related Death of 2025 in Out-Wayne County *Residents urged to protect themselves from mosquito bites*

Wayne County Health Division (WCHD) reports the first death associated with West Nile virus (WNV) in an Out-Wayne County resident for the 2025 mosquito season. The individual was an older adult with underlying health conditions.

So far this year, Michigan has reported 17 human cases of WNV illness, including 3 in Out-Wayne County.

“This tragic loss is a reminder that West Nile virus can have serious consequences and why prevention is so vital,” said Dr. Avani Sheth, Chief Medical Officer. “We urge residents to take simple, effective steps—like using insect repellent and draining standing water—to protect yourself and your loved ones.”

WNV spreads to people through the bite of an infected mosquito that has fed on an infected bird. It does not spread directly from person to person. Most people infected with WNV have no symptoms. When illness does occur, it usually begins 2 to 6 days after a mosquito bite and may include fever, headache, body aches, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. In rare cases, WNV can cause severe, potentially deadly illnesses such as meningitis or encephalitis (brain infection and swelling).

Seek medical care immediately if you experience high fever, severe headache, neck stiffness, muscle weakness, confusion, or tremors. People over 50, those with weakened immune systems, or with certain medical conditions, are at higher risk for severe illness.

There is no specific treatment or vaccine for WNV, so the best protection is prevention.

WNV activity in Michigan typically peaks in late August and early September, but cases may occur from summer through early fall.

Residents can reduce risk for West Nile virus and other mosquito-borne illnesses by following these precautions:

- Use insect repellent registered with the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#).
- Limit outdoor activity at dawn and dusk, when mosquitoes are most active.
- Wear long sleeves, pants, and socks when outdoors; apply repellent to clothing as well.
- Empty standing water to reduce mosquito breeding sites, such as tires, buckets, toys, pools, birdbaths, flowerpot saucers, or trash containers.
- Install or repair window and door screens to keep mosquitoes out of homes.

For more information on West Nile virus, visit www.cdc.gov/west-nile-virus or www.michigan.gov/wnv.

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