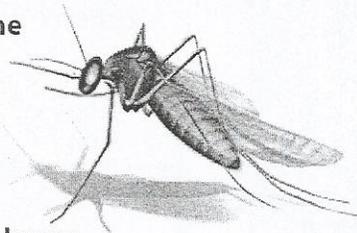


Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) West Nile Virus (WNV)

PRIMEX³ RISK MANAGEMENT BULLETIN

The recent wet weather has resulted in an increased mosquito population and the possibility of being bitten by mosquitoes. If the annoyance of being bitten isn't bad enough, it is possible that these insects may carry the Eastern Equine Encephalitis or West Nile Virus. Although the risk of these diseases is highest in mid to late summer, precautions should be taken at all times to prevent yourself, your employees and others that you may be responsible for from mosquito bites. The greatest risk is during the evening, night and early morning hours.



Outside workers, such as those in recreation departments, school athletics, highway/DPW departments, police, fire/EMS and other employees who may be exposed, should be advised to wear protective clothing and to use insect repellents on a regular basis.

Schools and recreation departments should develop policies and procedures to ensure that children and their parents, as well as other adults participating in recreation programs are informed of the risks from mosquitoes. Program supervisors should enforce policies about protective clothing and the use of insect repellent. This is most important for evening activities and camps, particularly in areas where water is present, such as beaches and parks. *The following information from the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services offers prevention guidelines:*

■ West Nile Virus (WNV)

West Nile Virus (WNV) was first seen in the U.S. in 1999 in the New York City area of Queens. WNV can live in a number of types of birds and is passed bird to bird by certain types of mosquitoes. Occasionally, an infected mosquito will pass the virus to humans or other animals. Most healthy people do not get sick from the virus, but sometimes it may cause symptoms. When a human becomes ill from WNV, they may have symptoms including encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) or meningitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain and spinal cord). Encephalitis and meningitis can also be caused by head injury, bacterial infections or, more commonly, other viral infections.

■ Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE)

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) is a rare but serious viral disease also caused by a virus transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito with more severe symptoms than those of West Nile Virus. EEE is an arbovirus (short for arthropod-borne, meaning spread by insects). Birds are the source of infection for mosquitoes, which can sometimes transmit the infection to horses, other animals, and, in rare cases, people.

■ The Spread of EEE and WNV



EEE and WNV are spread to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. When a mosquito bites an infected bird, the mosquito becomes infected; the infected mosquito could then bite a human and transmit the infection. Infected mosquitoes are the primary known source for EEE and WNV transmission to humans. These viruses are not spread by person-to-person contact such as touching, kissing, or caring for someone who is infected. No known transmission has occurred from birds to people; however, since dead birds may have the virus, one should not handle birds or any dead animals with their bare hands.

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