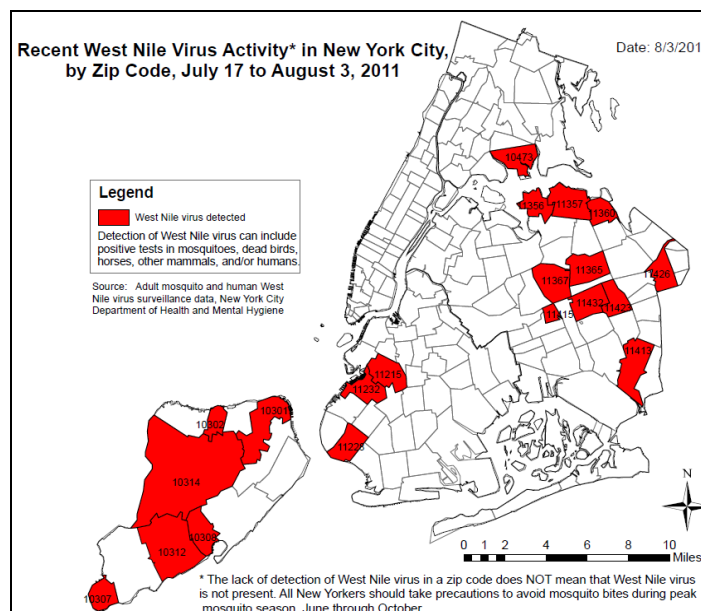


2011 DOHMH Advisory # 14: West Nile Advisory Mosquitoes Test Positive for West Nile Virus in New York City August 5, 2011

Please distribute to staff in the Departments of Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Family Medicine, Neurology, Infection Control, Infectious Disease, Emergency Medicine, Critical Care, Obstetrics and Gynecology, and Laboratory Medicine

Peak mosquito season in New York City (NYC) has begun. West Nile (WN) virus activity has been found in NYC and the surrounding counties in 2011. The NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) reminds providers to be alert for cases of WN viral disease.

- Since June 30th, WN virus has been identified in 80 mosquito pools collected in all NYC boroughs except Manhattan, with most activity in Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island (most recent activity shown in map below). Mosquito pools from New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and New York State have also tested positive for WN virus this season.
- The NYC DOHMH reminds providers to maintain vigilance for WN virus infections during peak adult mosquito season (July 1 – October 31).
 - Include WN virus in the differential diagnosis of patients with viral meningitis, encephalitis, acute flaccid paralysis and/or symptoms compatible with WN fever (symptoms of WN fever may include fever, headache, fatigue, myalgia or rash).
 - WN virus testing is widely available at commercial laboratories. The DOHMH Public Health Laboratory no longer performs routine testing for WN virus (link to guidelines for testing at the end of this advisory).
 - Routinely report cases of viral encephalitis and meningitis to the DOHMH using the Universal Reporting Form (link to instructions at the end of this advisory).
- Providers should advise their patients, especially adults 50 years and older, to protect themselves from mosquito bites (link to recommendations for personal precautions at the end of this advisory).



Dear Colleagues,

We are writing to alert you that West Nile season is underway in NYC. West Nile virus has been detected in 80 mosquito pools collected in all boroughs with the exception of Manhattan. The DOHMH will provide updates on current WN viral activity on our website at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/wnv/wnvactivity.shtml> so you can monitor whether the virus has been found in your area of the city.

(1) West Nile virus has been detected in 80 mosquito pools from four NYC boroughs, with most activity occurring in Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island.

Since June 30th, WN virus has been identified in 80 mosquito pools collected in the Bronx (1), Brooklyn (12), Queens (41) and Staten Island (26). The DOHMH has increased mosquito surveillance and larviciding in areas with new or persistent WN viral activity, and has scheduled adulticiding activities in areas of NYC where persistently high levels of WN viral activity have been detected, indicating a risk for human infection with WN virus (a link to the spray schedule is provided in the Resources list at the end of this advisory).

West Nile activity has also been detected in mosquitoes and birds in New York State (Nassau, Suffolk, Rockland, Erie and Onondaga), New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts. No human cases of WN viral disease have been reported from the northeastern United States so far in 2011. 27 cases of WN viral disease, including one fatality, have been reported nationally as of August 2, 2011.

(2) Providers should advise their patients, especially older residents, to protect themselves from mosquito bites.

With WN viral activity increasing in NYC and surrounding areas, health care providers should advise residents and visitors, especially adults 50 years of age or older, that WN virus is present now in mosquitoes in NYC, and to take measures immediately to protect themselves from mosquito bites. Prevention measures can include wearing protective clothing when outdoors from dusk to dawn, use of mosquito repellents, ensuring household screens are in good repair, and eliminating standing water where mosquitoes can breed.

(3) Report promptly by telephone or facsimile cases of West Nile virus infection with positive laboratory diagnostic tests, and routinely report all cases of encephalitis and viral meningitis.

The DOHMH reminds medical providers to be alert for possible cases of WN viral disease through the remainder of the peak adult mosquito season (through October). Currently, the most sensitive screening test for WN virus in humans is IgM enzyme immunoassay (EIA) on cerebrospinal fluid and/or serum. Refer to page 2 of NYC DOHMH Guidelines for West Nile Testing and Reporting Cases of Viral Encephalitis and Meningitis (available at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/wnv/wnv-reportinstructions.pdf>) for more detail on how to test for WN virus. Any patient with laboratory evidence suggesting a current or recent WN virus infection must be reported immediately to DOHMH. To report,

- During business hours:
 - Call the Bureau of Communicable Disease (BCD) at 347-396-2600, or
 - Fax a completed *Universal Reporting Form* (URF) to BCD at 347-396-2632, or
 - Submit the URF electronically (downloadable form or instructions to set up online reporting at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/hcp/hcp-urf.shtml>)
- After hours, call the NYC Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 or 1-212-POISONS (212-764-7667).

If you have questions regarding how to test for West Nile virus, you may contact the Bureau of Communicable Disease (BCD) at 212-788-9830.

As always, we appreciate our ongoing partnership with health care providers in NYC in reporting and investigating unusual disease manifestations or clusters.

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On Line Resources:

1. DOHMH West Nile Virus Guidelines and Recommendations for Health Care Providers, including recent Health Alerts are available at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/wnv/wnvhcp.shtml>.
2. NYC DOHMH Guidelines for West Nile Testing and Reporting Cases of Viral Encephalitis and Meningitis (June 2011 version) are available at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/wnv/wnv-reportinstructions.pdf>.
3. Universal Reporting Form (September 2009 version) can be downloaded from <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/hcp/hcp-urf.shtml>.
4. New York State Department of Health forms and instructions for specimen submission, including Collection and Submission of Specimens for Viral Encephalitis Testing Instructions (June 2010 version), Infectious Diseases Requisition Form, and Viral Encephalitis/Meningitis Case Report Form can be downloaded from <http://www.wadsworth.org/divisions/infdis/enceph/form.htm>.
5. See where West Nile virus has recently been found at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/wnv/wnvactivity.shtml>.
6. Recommendations for personal precautions against mosquitoes can be found at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/wnv/wnvfaq3.shtml>.
7. The West Nile Virus Spray and Aerial Larviciding Schedule is available at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/wnv/wnvspray.shtml>.