



COUNTY OF ORANGE HEALTH CARE AGENCY

EPIDEMIOLOGY & ASSESSMENT PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

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To: Orange County Physicians and Other Healthcare Providers
From: Hildy Meyers, MD, MPH, Medical Director of Epidemiology

West Nile Virus Human Infections Occurring in Orange County

The first human infections with West Nile Virus (WNV) in Orange County this year have been reported. Positive dead birds and mosquito pools indicate the presence of the virus throughout the County. **Please consider WNV infection in your patients with aseptic meningitis, encephalitis, acute flaccid paralysis or prolonged fever and submit specimens for testing.**

- **Description of WNV infection:**
 - The incubation period for WNV infection ranges from 2 to 14 days after a bite from an infected mosquito. Most infections in humans are asymptomatic.
 - Clinical syndromes range from febrile headache to aseptic meningitis, encephalitis, or acute flaccid paralysis. Rash, myalgia, lymphadenopathy, and muscle weakness may also be prominent.
 - People over the age of 50 years are at risk for more severe disease from WNV infection.
- **Diagnosis** is made by serology (IgM or paired acute and convalescent IgG) for WNV. Testing is available through commercial laboratories and through OC Public Health on a case-by-case basis (714-834-8180).
 - WNV IgM may be negative early in the course of the disease and serology may cross react with other flaviviruses (e.g., dengue, St. Louis Encephalitis, or yellow fever, including yellow fever vaccine).
 - Repeat serology may be indicated if initial testing is negative in the first 10 days after onset of symptoms.
- **Treatment** is mainly supportive care. For clinical guidance:
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/clinicians/>.
For clinical trials: www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/clinicalTrials.htm.
- **Reporting:** WN fever, West Nile neuroinvasive disease, asymptomatic WNV infection, aseptic meningitis, and encephalitis are all reportable diseases and should be reported within one working day to OC Epidemiology via phone (714-834-8180) or fax (714-834-8196).

Preventive recommendations:

- Eliminate standing water on your property, as this is where mosquitoes breed. Drain pots, unclog gutters, and keep swimming pools clean and chlorinated or drained and covered.
- Make sure that door and window screens are installed and in good condition to keep mosquitoes out.
- When outdoors, use an insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535. Always follow the product directions on the label.
- Avoid being outdoors during dusk and dawn which are prime mosquito biting times and wear long sleeves and long pants while outdoors.

Resources

Orange County Health Care Agency: www.ochealthinfo.com/epi/wnv
Orange County Vector Control District: www.ocvcd.org or Ph: 714-971-2421
California Department of Public Health: <http://www.westnile.ca.gov/>
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile

Report cases to Orange County Epidemiology: phone (714-834-8180) or fax (714-834-8196)