



Southwest Nebraska
Public Health Department

NEWS RELEASE

July 6, 2018

For Immediate Release

Contact: Melissa Propp, RN, Surveillance Nurse 308-345-4223 nurse@swhealth.ne.gov

West Nile Virus Recommendations

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department reminds residents to be vigilant to avoid getting bitten by mosquitoes while outdoors. The severity of West Nile virus (WNV) came to the attention of public health officials in approximately 1999. From 1999 to 2016, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recorded a total of 46,086 cases with 1,888 resulting in death. Nebraska has had a total of 3,798 cases since 2002 and 70 deaths.

“With the increase of moisture received in the area, mosquito populations are also increasing. This may be a good time to take extra precautions to remove mosquitoes from your yard by emptying containers and using larvicides in standing water,” explains Melissa Propp, Public Health Nurse. “Most cities spray for mosquitoes; however, you may still consider spraying your own property.”

Typical West Nile Virus symptoms include fever, headache, body aches and rash. In severe cases WNV can invade the brain and spinal cord leading to stiff neck, confusion, paralysis, coma and even death. The best way to prevent West Nile Virus is to prevent getting bitten by a mosquito.

Utilizing the following tips will help prevent mosquito bites:

- ✓ Limit time outside at dawn and dusk when mosquitos are most active.
- ✓ Wear pants and long-sleeves during peak mosquito times.
- ✓ Repair all holes in screens.
- ✓ Get rid of standing water.
- ✓ Check rain gutters for debris that could cause water to pool.
- ✓ Use insect repellent with DEET and repeat every four (4) hours. Check the expiration date on your insect repellent.

More information on West Nile Virus may be found at www.swhealth.ne.gov or by calling the McCook office at 308-345-4223. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th Street – one block north of Arby’s in McCook. The Imperial office is located at 501 Broadway, south entrance. You can also follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins and Red Willow counties.

####