

# Defend Your Garden

# PROOF

## EVERY WEEK

- Tip and toss free-standing containers such as flowerpot saucers, watering cans and buckets.
- Change the water and clean bird baths with a garden hose.
- Empty water that collects in folds of tarps used to cover woodpiles, boats, etc.
- Position corrugated drain pipes to ensure drainage or dump out water.

## ONCE A MONTH

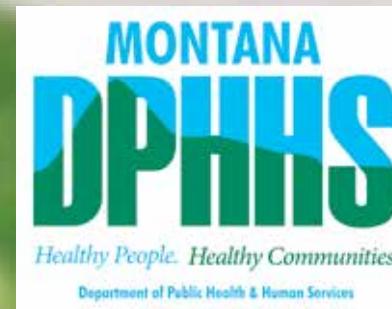
- Apply a larvicide (an insecticide applied to water to kill mosquito larvae) to standing water that cannot be tipped, tossed or drained.

## AS NECESSARY

- Clean leaves and debris from roof gutters.
- Recycle old tires.
- Clear debris to allow water to flow freely from drainage ditches and culverts.
- Filter or aerate ornamental ponds using a circulation pump, or stock the pond with fish.
- Drain or fill-in puddles and areas of your yard that remain wet and soggy for more than a week.
- Check window and door screens and repair as needed to ensure that mosquitoes cannot enter.
- Apply a barrier spray to vegetation around your home. Use an insecticide containing the active ingredient permethrin to provide temporary relief from biting adult mosquitoes. Treatment will last two to three weeks, depending on the rain. Always follow label instructions.

## ORGANIZE A NEIGHBORHOOD CLEAN-UP

- This is the most effective way to control mosquitoes in your area.



Montana DPHHS  
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# Understanding Mosquitoes and West Nile Virus

Courtesy of Fairfax County Health Department



Mosquitoes are more than just a nuisance; they can also transmit disease to people.

# PROOF

Here is what you should know and do to protect yourself and your family.

## What Counties in Montana are doing

To protect the public's health, aggressive efforts are underway in certain Counties:

- Collaborate with DPHHS, Montana Mosquito and Vector Control Association (MMVCA), Carroll College, and Montana State University for mosquito surveillance, mosquito pool testing and laboratory testing for WNV and other vector-borne encephalities.
- Build laboratory capacity and proficiency to conduct WNV surveillance and other arboviral diseases.
- Increase and improve WNV education and encourage preventative behaviors to reduce the likelihood of WNV transmission.
- Public education and community outreach.

Contact your local health department for more information!

## West Nile Virus

West Nile virus was first detected in the United States in 1999 and has affected many individuals and families, sometimes resulting in serious illness and even death. This virus is transmitted by mosquitoes from birds to both horses and people.

If you are bitten by a mosquito, you probably do not need to see a doctor. Most people who are infected with West Nile virus will not have any symptoms and some will develop a mild flu-like illness. However, the virus can also cause encephalitis or meningitis which can be serious health threats. Symptoms generally appear three to 15 days after exposure.

## Signs and Symptoms

**SERIOUS SYMPTOMS** in a few people: About one in 150 people infected with West Nile virus will develop severe illness. This may include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness and paralysis. These symptoms may last several weeks and neurological effects may be permanent.

**MILDER SYMPTOMS** in some people: Up to 20 percent of people infected with West Nile virus develop West Nile fever, symptoms of which may include fever, headache, body aches, nausea, vomiting, and sometimes swollen lymph glands or a skin rash on the chest, stomach and back. Symptoms may last a few days to several weeks.

**NO SYMPTOMS** in most people: Approximately 80 percent of people who are infected with West Nile virus will not show any symptoms at all.

## Who is at Risk?

While everyone is equally susceptible to West Nile virus, people over the age of 50 are at greatest risk for contracting more severe forms of the disease. No vaccine for people exists at this time for West Nile virus and only supportive treatment is available for symptomatic cases. Testing for West Nile virus involves a blood or spinal fluid test.

## Things You Can Do

Actions alone are not enough — we need your help to “Fight the Bite”! Here is what you can do:

- Choose and use a repellent that contains one of these active ingredients: DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR-3535. Always follow label instructions and do not allow young children to apply insect repellent to themselves.
- Wear long, loose, and light-colored clothing to avoid mosquito bites.
- Eliminate or treat standing water around your home where mosquitoes breed.

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