

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
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### *North Dakota Reports First West Nile Virus-Related Death in 2016*

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health announced the state’s first West Nile virus-related death in 2016. The individual was a man who resided in the eastern region of North Dakota and was older than 60 years of age.

Most people infected with West Nile virus experience no symptoms or have only mild symptoms, such as fever and headaches. In more severe forms of infection, the virus can cause high fever, severe headache, stiff neck, altered mental state, and death.

“People older than 60, or those who have underlying health issues are at the greatest risk of developing severe illness due to West Nile virus infection. The death of this gentleman is an unfortunate reminder of how serious West Nile virus can be,” said Laura Cronquist, epidemiologist with the North Dakota Department of Health. “North Dakotans should continue to take steps to protect themselves from mosquito bites, especially while spending time outdoors over the upcoming holiday weekend.”

To reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes that may carry West Nile virus, the state health department recommends the following protective measures:

- Use insect repellents containing ingredients registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – such as DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus (or PMD), or permethrin. Always follow the directions on the manufacturer’s label for safe and effective use.
- Limit outdoor activities between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most likely to bite.
- When possible, wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and socks while outside.
- Eliminate stagnant water and leaf debris in containers around homes where mosquitoes can lay their eggs (e.g., gutters, buckets, flowerpots, old tires, wading pools and birdbaths).

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- Keep mosquitoes from entering your home by installing and maintaining screens in windows and doors.
- Keep the grass around your home trimmed.

For more information about West Nile virus, visit [www.ndhealth.gov/wny](http://www.ndhealth.gov/wny) or contact Laura Cronquist, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2378.

*Note: The Department of Health's Policy for Release of Information Concerning West Nile Virus Cases is included on the next page for your information.*

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*Please note: To access archived news releases and other information, visit the North Dakota Department of Health Press Room at <https://health.nd.gov/news-media/news-releases>. Find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ndhealth](http://www.facebook.com/ndhealth) or Twitter at [twitter.com/nddoh](http://twitter.com/nddoh).*