

NEWS RELEASE | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | July 3, 2019

First case of West Nile virus reported in North Dakota

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) has confirmed the first human case of West Nile virus (WNV) disease this season. The individual resides in McHenry county and was not hospitalized.

“This is the second year in a row where our first case is earlier than usual,” said Evan Bischoff, WNV surveillance coordinator. “There is risk of contracting WNV anytime mosquitoes are active, so it is important to protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites.”

The NDDoH recommends residents take these precautions to avoid mosquito bites:

- Use insect repellent registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that contain ingredients such as DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus, PMD, and permethrin (clothing only). Always follow the directions on the manufacturer’s label for safe and effective use.
- Wear protective clothing outdoors such as long-sleeved shirts, long pants and socks.
- Limit outdoor activities between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes that can carry WNV are most likely to bite.
- Eliminate stagnant water in containers around homes where mosquitoes can lay their eggs (e.g. gutters, buckets, flower pots, old tires, wading pools and birdbaths).
- Install or repair screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out of your residence.
- Maintain a well-trimmed yard and landscape around your home.

Most people infected with West Nile virus experience no symptoms. Those who develop symptoms will commonly report fever, headache, body/joint aches or rash. People who develop severe illness may experience stiff neck, altered mental status, paralysis, coma and possibly death. People over 60, or those who have underlying health issues are at greater risk for developing West Nile neuroinvasive disease.

For more information about West Nile virus, contact Evan Bischoff, NDDoH, at 701.328.2378 or visit www.ndhealth.gov/wnv.

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