



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY & PUBLIC HEALTH

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Outdoor Activities During Mosquito Season

When is mosquito season in New Hampshire?

Mosquitoes are generally active from June to October.

Is there a specific time of day when mosquitoes are most active?

Mosquitoes tend to be most active, and tend to bite more, during evening, nighttime, and dawn hours.

Should I take personal precautions throughout the day?

If mosquitoes are not active and you are not experiencing any bites, it is not necessary to take personal precautions.

Should I stay indoors and limit outdoor activities?

It is not necessary to limit outdoor activities but precautions should be taken during evenings, nighttime, and dawn hours when mosquitoes are most active.

What can I do to reduce my risk of becoming infected with West Nile virus?

From June to October, when mosquitoes are most active, take the following precautions:

- Protective clothing such as long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and socks should be worn if outside during evening, nighttime, and dawn hours, because that is the time when mosquitoes are most active and likely to bite.
- If outside during evening, nighttime, and dawn hours, consider the use of an effective insect repellent. If using DEET, use a concentration of no more than 10% DEET (N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) for children and no more than 30% DEET for adults.
- **USE DEET ACCORDING TO MANUFACTURER'S DIRECTIONS:**
 - Do not use DEET on infants or pregnant women. (Instead: avoid outdoor activities during peak biting times, wear covering clothing and use netting/screens to preclude mosquito bites.)
 - Do not allow young children to apply DEET themselves.
 - Do not apply DEET directly to children. Apply DEET to your own hands and then put it on the child.
 - Avoid putting on the hands of children or near their eyes and mouth.
 - Do not spray directly on the face, spray into the hands first and then apply to the face.

- Do not apply to cuts, wounds, or irritated skin.
- Do not use under clothing.
- Do not spray DEET-containing products in enclosed areas.
- DEET is effective for approximately four hours. Avoid prolonged or excessive use of DEET. Use sparingly to cover exposed skin and clothing.
- Wash all treated skin and clothing after returning indoors.
- Store DEET out of reach of children.
- Vitamin B, ultrasonic devices, incense, and bug zappers have not been shown to be effective in preventing mosquito bites.

More information on mosquito repellents is available in a technical article for physicians at the American College of Physicians website: <http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/full/347/1/13>

What can I do around my home to help reduce exposure to mosquitoes?

Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Weeds, tall grass, and bushes provide an outdoor home for the adult mosquito commonly associated with West Nile virus. Mosquitoes can enter homes through unscreened windows or doors, or broken screens. Here are some steps that you can take:

- Make sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace all screens in your home that have tears or holes.
- Remove all discarded tires from your property. The used tire has become the most important domestic mosquito-breeding habitat in this country.
- Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots, or similar water-holding containers. Do not overlook containers that have become overgrown by aquatic vegetation.
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers that are left out-of-doors. The side drainage holes in these containers allow enough water collection for mosquito breeding.
- Make sure roof gutters drain properly. Clean clogged gutters in the spring and fall.
- Tightly screen "rain barrels" to ensure mosquitoes can't deposit eggs in or on water.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools and outdoor hot tubs. If not in use, keep empty and covered.
- Drain water from pool covers.
- Aerate ornamental pools or stock them with fish. Water gardens are fashionable but become major mosquito producers if they are allowed to stagnate.
- Turn over wheelbarrows and change water in birdbaths at least twice weekly. Both provide breeding habitat for domestic mosquitoes
- Eliminate any standing water that collects on your property. Use landscaping as needed. Mosquitoes will develop in any puddle that last more than 4 days.
- Remind or help neighbors to eliminate breeding sites on their properties.

Please Note: Although certain pesticide products are available for sale in the marketplace to control mosquito larvae, one must obtain a special permit from the Department of Agriculture, Division of Pesticide Control to be able to apply pesticides to any surface waters in the state of New Hampshire. Questions regarding how to apply for such special permits may best be directed to the NH Department of Agriculture, Division of Pesticide Control at 1-603-271-3550.

What is the State doing to address the possible presence of West Nile virus?

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, together with other city, state, and federal agencies, has developed a plan to assess for the presence of West Nile virus and to find and control the kind of mosquitoes known to carry the virus. This plan includes trapping and testing mosquitoes in selected areas throughout the state, testing dead birds and other animals, and human surveillance. If West Nile virus is found, focused and limited applications of pesticides may be needed to prevent the spread to people.

What health risks are posed to people and pets from pesticides?

If the West Nile virus is detected in New Hampshire and control measures are needed, pesticide application will be recommended; the products that will be applied will be used according to integrated pest management guidelines set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In the small amounts used, these pesticides would pose negligible risks to people and to pets. Residents will learn about spraying schedules through different mechanisms that may include public service announcements, the media, the DHHS/DES websites, a telephone information line, and local authorities.

Should I report dead birds?

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services is taking reports on dead bird sightings. While we are interested in collecting information about dead birds as part of our efforts to understand West Nile virus, we may not be testing *every* dead bird reported. However, crows and blue jays are of particular interest. The Department will only be collecting a sample of all the dead birds reported. However, we encourage New Hampshire residents to report all dead bird sightings to assist the Department's monitoring efforts.

If you leave a message on the information line and do not receive a return phone call to arrange pick up of the dead bird within 24 hours of making the report or by the next business day, please carefully dispose of the dead bird. West Nile virus has never been shown to spread directly from birds to people; however, dead birds or any dead animals should not be handled with bare hands. Bury the dead bird using gloves or a shovel to avoid direct contact. You may also use double plastic bags to place the carcass in a garbage can according to your local ordinances.

For more information, call the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, West Nile Virus Info line, at 1-866-273-6453.

For health care providers with clinical questions or to report human suspect or probable cases please contact the Bureau of Communicable Disease Control at 1-800-852-3345 ext. 4496.