

Presence of West Nile Virus Found in Mosquitoes in Our Area

The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit has been actively monitoring mosquitoes for West Nile Virus this season. Recent sampling has identified positive mosquitoes that carry the West Nile Virus. Earlier this season, neighbouring health units including Ottawa, Eastern Ontario (Cornwall) and KFLA (Kingston) Public Health have identified positive mosquitoes.

This virus is spread to humans by the bite of an infected mosquito. For most people, the risk of illness from West Nile virus is low. However, it can cause serious illness in others.

With the recent warm temperatures mosquitoes have remained active late in the season. The Health Unit recommends that you take the necessary precautions to protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites.

The following measures can help reduce the risk of West Nile virus:

- Apply insect repellents sparingly to exposed skin. Effective repellents contain Deet or Icaridin. Be sure to follow directions and use age appropriate concentrations. **DO NOT USE** personal insect repellents on children under two years of age.
- Wear light coloured clothing, long pants and long sleeves, as well as shoes and socks during peak mosquito times to prevent mosquito bites.
- Avoid being outside at dusk and dawn, as mosquitos are most active at that time.
- Use netting when sleeping outdoors or in an unscreened structure and to protect small babies from insect bites.
- Repair or replace old and torn screens in doors, windows, and vents that no longer prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.
- Consult your health care provider if you suspect that you have an insect transmittable disease such as West Nile Virus.

More information regarding this disease and its symptoms can be found on our website <http://www.healthunit.org/westnile/>. You can also call 1-800-660-5853 or connect with LGLHealthunit on Facebook and Twitter.