



WELLNESS NOW

For Release: Sept 17, 2015 – Contact us at media@occhd.org 405-417-1634

OKC-COUNTY HEALTH CONFIRMS TWO CASES OF WEST NILE VIRUS

The Oklahoma City-County Health Department experts have confirmed two human cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) in Oklahoma County. That brings our total up to four human cases with no deaths this year. In 2014, we only had one case of WNV. We remind the public that the virus can be difficult for senior citizens to recover from, especially those with pre-existing conditions.

OKC-County Health is advising residents to take extra precaution against the mosquito-borne illness by avoiding mosquito bites and reducing habitats where mosquitoes live and breed. “Looking around their homes to identify and get rid of any sources of standing water is one of the best measures against WNV as stagnant water is where mosquito larvae can grow,” says OCCHD Public Health Protection Chief Phil Maytubby.

To reduce mosquito habitats: Prevent items such as buckets, cans, pool covers, flower pots, and tires from holding standing water. Empty and refill birdbaths and your pet’s outdoor water bowl daily.

Swimming pools and fishponds with circulating water generally are not a problem. “As long as the water is moving the larvae cannot grow,” Maytubby says.

For standing water sources that cannot be drained, OCCHD recommends microbial larvicides that kill mosquito larvae before they emerge as adults. Use of larvicides can reduce or eliminate the need for ground or aerial application of pesticides to kill adult mosquitoes. They are available at hardware or home improvement stores. Make sure screens on your home are in good repair.

Here is a simple way to remember how to “Fight the Bite” using the 4 D’s of mosquito safety:

1. DRAIN standing water on your property so mosquitoes won’t breed
2. Use insect repellent that contains DEET on your clothes
3. Stay indoors at DUSK and DAWN when mosquitos are most prevalent
4. DRESS in long sleeves and pants and spray repellent on your clothes.

West Nile symptoms include fever, headache, body ache, and sometimes a rash. The most susceptible to the illness include infants and the elderly. If symptoms are severe, health officials say to contact your doctor immediately.

*For more information on terms and different types of West Nile Virus infections:

<https://www.occhd.org/FightTheBite/WNVFAQs>

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