

# News Release

## CDC, Fight the Bite

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### The Warren County Health Department Joins CDC to Help Prevent West Nile Virus

The Warren County Health Department is joining forces with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to raise awareness of West Nile virus (WNV) and the steps people can take to prevent the mosquito-borne illness. The Fight the Bite initiative is a national effort to help Americans learn more about WNV prevention during peak periods of mosquito activity. State and county health departments – and their local partners – are working to promote WNV prevention information that emphasizes the following key steps:

- **Avoid mosquito bites:** Use insect repellent when outdoors especially from dusk to dawn. Look for EPA-labeled products containing active ingredients, such as DEET, Picaridin (KBR3023), or oil of lemon eucalyptus (p-menthane 3, 8-diol). Apply more repellent, according to label instructions, if mosquitoes start to bite.
- **Mosquito-proof homes:** Fix or install window and door screens and cover or eliminate empty containers with standing water where mosquitoes can lay eggs.

Seasonal activity varies from year to year, but mosquitoes carrying WNV remain a threat. WNV has spread from coast to coast with new cases being reported daily. Since WNV activity in the United States often does not peak until September, more cases are expected. WNV can cause serious neurological illnesses, such as meningitis and encephalitis. Many cases are not reported,

so the true number of WNV-related illnesses is likely to be higher. But despite WNV's spread across the country and the severe illnesses that it can cause, large numbers of Americans are not taking the precautions necessary to protect themselves from mosquito bites.

“Healthy, active adults who are 50 and older have the highest risk of illness caused by West Nile virus. People who work outdoors in occupations like farming or construction are at greater risk of getting bitten by an infected mosquito,” said the CDC. “One bite from an infected mosquito can lead to a severe illness and possibly life- altering illness. Prevention is the key to protection.”

People can stay healthy by using simple, proven strategies to protect themselves and their families. In particular, consumers are advised to use mosquito repellent products containing EPA-approved active ingredients, such as DEET, picardin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus.

For more information, visit CDC's Web site at [www.cdc.gov/westnile](http://www.cdc.gov/westnile).

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