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FIRST HUMAN CASE OF WEST NILE VIRUS IN COUNTY  
Public Urged to Follow Prevention Measures

The Kankakee County Health Department reports that the first human case of West Nile Virus (WNV) in Kankakee County in 2012 is a male in his 50s from Bourbonnais.

The Health Department reminds county residents that WNV activity is widespread in the area so the risk of WNV is strong and may remain so for some time this season; therefore residents should concentrate on personal protection. Residents are urged to be cautious, but not to curtail their outdoor activities.

WNV is transmitted to people by infected mosquitoes. The best way to prevent WNV disease is to avoid mosquito bites:

- Use insect repellents when you go outdoors
- Wear long sleeves and pants during dawn and dusk
- Install or repair screens on windows and doors. Use air conditioning, if you have it
- Empty standing water from items outside your home such as flowerpots, buckets, and kiddie pools.

Approximately one in five people who are infected with WNV will develop symptoms such as fever, headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. Less than 1 percent will develop a serious neurologic illness such as encephalitis or meningitis (inflammation of the brain or surrounding tissues).

People over 50 years of age and those with certain medical conditions, such as cancer, diabetes, hypertension, kidney disease, and organ transplants are at greater risk for serious illness. As of August 14, 2012, 43 states have reported WNV infections in people, birds, or mosquitoes. A total of 693 cases of WNV disease in people, including 26 deaths, have been reported to CDC. Of these 406 (59%) were classified as neuroinvasive disease (such as meningitis or encephalitis) and 287 (41%) were classified as non-neuroinvasive disease.

The 693 cases reported thus far in 2012 is the highest number of WNV disease cases reported to CDC through the second week in August since WNV was first detected in the United States in 1999. Over 80 percent of the cases have been reported from six states (Texas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and California) and almost half of all cases have been reported from Texas.

There are no medications to treat or vaccines to prevent WNV infection. People with milder illnesses typically recover on their own, although symptoms may last for several weeks. In more severe cases, patients often need to be hospitalized to receive supportive treatment, such as intravenous fluids, pain medication, and nursing care. Anyone who has symptoms that cause concern should contact a health care provider.

Additional information about WNV can be found on the IL Department of Public Health's website at [www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/wnv.htm](http://www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/wnv.htm). Surveillance numbers are updated every Wednesday afternoon [www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/wnvsurveillance12.htm](http://www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/wnvsurveillance12.htm).

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