First Human Case of West Nile Virus Reported

The Skokie Health Department is urging residents to protect themselves against mosquito bites after an adult has been hospitalized with West Nile Virus infection.

Residents are urged to take the following precautions:

- Avoid mosquito-infested areas.
- Mosquitoes breed in standing water. Dump standing water in plant pots, birdbaths, kiddie pools, buckets or anything that can hold water.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.
- Apply mosquito repellent to exposed skin. The most effective repellents contain at least 20% DEET; follow application instructions carefully.
- Keep tight-fitting screens on doors and windows to prevent mosquitoes from entering homes.
- Maintain all swimming pools in a clean and sanitary manner; drain water from pool covers.
- Keep grass and shrubbery cut short.
- Keep gutters clear and eliminate dips that collect water.

Symptoms of WNV infection begin three to 15 days after being bitten. Most infected people have mild symptoms, such as a fever, headache and rash that lasts a few days. In rare cases, WNV can cause severe disease with muscle weakness, stiff neck, disorientation, convulsions, paralysis and coma. Older adults and people with compromised immune systems are at an increased risk of complications from the virus.

There is no specific treatment for WNV other than to treat symptoms. If you think you have WNV infection, contact your healthcare provider.

The Village of Skokie Health Department and the North Shore Mosquito Abatement District will continue our efforts to monitor and control mosquitoes through the end of the season.

For information on West Nile Virus contact the Skokie Health Department at 847/933-8484. For information on mosquito control operations, please contact the North Shore Mosquito Abatement District at 847/446/9434.

Released by Public Information Division
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