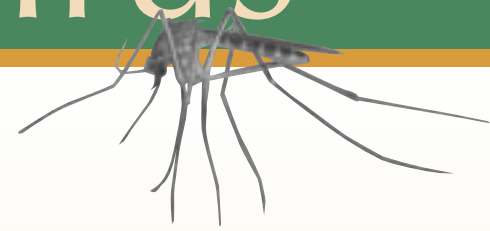


# West Nile virus



## MOSQUITO BITE REDUCTION

West Nile virus (WNV) is a new disease in Manitoba. The risk of WNV will vary from year to year based on infected bird populations, mosquito infection rates, precipitation, temperature, and a number of other factors yet to be determined. The greatest risk for being bitten by a WNV-infected mosquito is during the months of July, August and September.

The virus is transmitted by mosquitoes. Most people who are bitten by an infected mosquito do not become ill, and for those who do, the symptoms are usually mild. In some cases, serious illness and death can occur.

Mosquitoes can bite any time. However, the peak hours of mosquito biting activity are usually at dawn and dusk.

Here are some steps you can take to reduce mosquito bites:

- Reduce the amount of time you spend outdoors at dawn and dusk, when mosquitoes are most active.
- Keep babies and infants indoors during peak mosquito hours.
- Wear light-coloured, loose-fitting, tightly woven clothing.
- Wear long-sleeved tops, long pants, shoes and socks when spending time outside.
- Check that your door and window screens fit tightly and are free of holes.
- Consider applying mosquito repellent containing DEET when outdoors. Be sure to read and follow the instructions on the product label. Wash repellent off your skin when returning indoors. Health Canada recommends:
  - **Children under 6 months of age:** DO NOT use personal insect repellents containing DEET on infants under 6 months of age.
  - **Children 6 months to 2 years of age:** Where there is a high risk of insect bites, one application per day of a product with the lowest concentration of DEET (10% DEET or less) may be considered and applied sparingly. Avoid the child's face and hands.
  - **Children between 2 and 12 years of age:** Use the least concentrated product (10% DEET or less) not more than three times a day. Try to avoid the child's face and hands.
  - **Adults and children 12 years of age and older:** Products containing no more than a 30% concentration of DEET will provide sufficient protection (30% DEET will provide about 6 hours of protection against bites).
  - **Pregnant or Lactating Women:** There is no indication that there is a hazard to unborn or nursing children when pregnant or lactating women use products containing DEET. However, non-chemical methods to reduce mosquito bites (protective clothing, avoiding peak hours of mosquito activity, etc.) can be considered as an alternative to repellents.
- Eliminate unnecessary standing water around your home (see the Manitoba Health fact sheet *Reducing Mosquito Numbers Around Your Home*).

For more information, see  
[www.gov.mb.ca](http://www.gov.mb.ca)