



**MORROW COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT**  
Pamela Butler, MPH Health Commissioner  
619 W. Marion Rd., Suite B, Rm. 143  
Mt. Gilead, OH 43338  
Phone: (419) 947-1545  
Fax: (419) 946-6807  
Email: [mchdpip@morrowcountyhealth.org](mailto:mchdpip@morrowcountyhealth.org)  
Online: [www.morrowcountyhealth.org](http://www.morrowcountyhealth.org)

---

## News Release – August 30, 2018

For more information, please contact  
Stephanie Bragg, RN BSN MHA  
Assistant Health Commissioner / Director of Nursing  
[stephanie.bragg@morrowcountyhealth.org](mailto:stephanie.bragg@morrowcountyhealth.org) | (419) 947-1545 x318

### **Mosquito Bite Prevention is a Priority for Morrow County Residents**

The Morrow County Health District is stressing the importance of mosquito bite prevention for all county residents. Earlier this month, Morrow County Health District reported that two people in the county tested positive for La Crosse virus disease. Since then, another case of La Crosse disease was reported in Morrow County. In addition, this week the Ohio Department of Health has confirmed that there is West Nile virus present within the Morrow County mosquito population.

Morrow County Health District has **no** reports of human cases of West Nile disease at this time. The last case of a West Nile virus infection in a person in Morrow County was in 2012.

#### **Mosquito Population Testing**

During the mosquito season (May – October) the Ohio Department of Health collects groups of adult mosquitoes, called mosquito pools, from all over the state for testing. These pools are made up of around 50 of the same type of mosquitoes that are likely to spread viruses. After the mosquitoes are collected, they are sent for testing to see if they are infected with any viruses. This month, 21 mosquito pools were tested around Morrow County, and 6 of those pools tested positive for West Nile virus. This means that there are infected mosquitos in Morrow County that could possibly spread the virus to humans.

#### **About West Nile Virus**

West Nile virus is a virus that is spread to people by infected mosquitoes. It was first seen in the United States in 1999, and has spread to all of the states except for Alaska and Hawaii since then. On average, Ohio sees about 23 human cases per year, but that number can range anywhere from 2 cases to over 400.

#### **How West Nile is Spread**

People can get West Nile virus when they are bitten by an infected mosquito. The type of mosquito that most often spreads this virus is the northern house mosquito, *Culex pipiens*. These mosquitoes are active from dusk to dawn, and they lay their eggs in catch basins, stagnant water in ditches, and in containers of water like flower pots and clogged rain gutters.

#### **How to Prevent West Nile Infections**

The best way to prevent West Nile disease is to prevent mosquito bites, and to stop mosquitoes from

breeding near your home. You can do this by:

- Using an EPA-approved insect repellent on exposed skin
  - Find the best insect repellent for you by using the EPA's online search tool at: <https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/find-repellent-right-you>
- Wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and socks when you are able
- Wearing clothing that has been treated with an insect repellent like permethrin
- Using screens for your doors and windows to keep mosquitoes out of your house
- Preventing water from collecting near your house by:
  - Emptying standing water from flowerpots, buckets, and other containers
  - Throwing away trash that can collect water, like tin cans and plastic containers
  - Checking and cleaning clogged roof gutters at least two times a year
- For larger areas that you can't empty, you can consider using products that contain *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti) to control mosquito larvae
  - These products are available at many home improvement stores
  - Be sure to follow product directions when using

### **West Nile Virus vs. La Crosse Virus**

Both of these viruses are spread to people from mosquito bites, but each virus is spread from a different type of mosquito. West Nile virus is spread by the northern house mosquito, *Culex pipiens*. These mosquitoes bite from early evening to early morning (dusk to dawn), and like to lay their eggs in stagnant water and containers with high amounts of organic matter, like clogged gutters. La Crosse virus is spread by the tree-hole mosquito, *Aedes triseriatus*. This type of mosquito bites during the day, and lays their eggs in tree holes, and in man-made containers that will hold water for a week.

Since both types of mosquitos have been found within Morrow County, it is important to prevent mosquito bites during both the daytime and nighttime hours. It is also important to stop both types of mosquitoes from breeding around your home.

For more information, please call the Morrow County Health District at 419-947-1545.

### References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018). West Nile virus. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html>

Ohio Department of Health. (2018). Mosquito-borne diseases. Retrieved from: <https://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhprograms/bid/zdp/animals/mosquitoes>

Ohio Department of Health. (2018). West Nile virus disease. *Infectious Disease Control Manual*. Retrieved from: <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/pdf/IDCM/wnv.pdf>