

# WHAT IS WEST NILE VIRUS?

West Nile is a mosquito-borne virus that can cause encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) or meningitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain and spinal cord). West Nile virus (WNV) is spread to humans by the bite of an infected mosquito. A mosquito becomes infected by biting a bird that carries the virus.



You or your child cannot get West Nile virus from a person who has the disease. West Nile virus is not spread by person-to-person contact such as touching, kissing, or caring for someone who is infected.

Though a vaccine is not available for the virus, prevention can be the key to reducing the number of mosquitoes in your area and avoiding those mosquitoes that are outdoors. By reducing the niches where mosquitoes breed, you can reduce the number of WNV-carrying mosquitoes in Allen County.

## RETIRE THOSE TIRES!

In 2002, the Fort Wayne- Allen County Department of Health surveyed water bodies found in areas around human West Nile virus cases. This survey found that **66%** of these mosquito breeding water bodies were **TIRES!**

Rid your community of this threat by recycling unneeded tires through the City of Fort Wayne's Neighborhood Tire Program. Through their neighborhood association, Fort Wayne residents may register to dispose of their car tires. The association is paid a \$.75/tire rate, for up to 200 car tires each month.

This program runs April through October. Have your neighborhood association officers contact Neighborhood Services at 427-2157 to become a part of this program!

Residents of Allen County can also dispose of their tires for a minimal fee through the Allen County Solid Waste Management District's Tire Amnesty Day. This event takes place in early October. Contact the District at 449-7878 for event information or other tire recycling opportunities.

## WHO TO CONTACT

**Fort Wayne - Allen County  
Department of Health**

Vector Control Division

260-449-7459 [www.fw-ac-deptofhealth.com](http://www.fw-ac-deptofhealth.com)

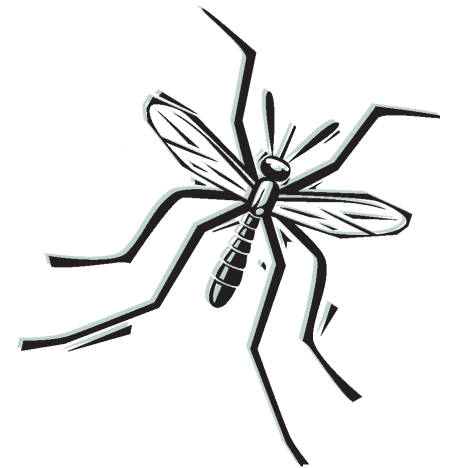
**Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation  
Department**

260-427-6000 [www.cityoffortwayne.org](http://www.cityoffortwayne.org)

# WEST NILE VIRUS

*Prevention*

*Personal Protection*



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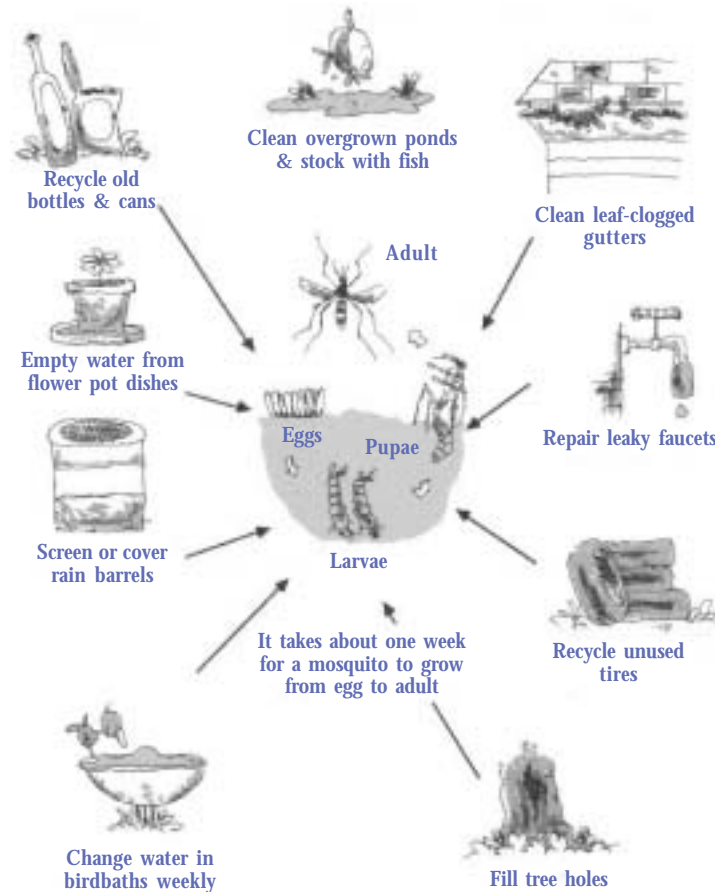
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# PREVENTION

- Make sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace all screens that have tears or holes.
- Remove or empty water in old tires, tin cans, buckets, drums, bottles, or other places with standing water where mosquitoes might breed.
- Check clogged gutters and flat roofs for poor drainage.
- Empty or turn over plastic wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use.
- Clean and chlorinate outdoor swimming pools, saunas and hot tubs. If not in use, keep empty and covered.
- Change the water in birdbaths and empty plant pots or drip trays at least once a week
- Empty your pet's water bowl daily.
- Keep weeds and tall grass cut short; adult mosquitoes seek these shady places to rest during the hot daylight hours.
- If you have an ornamental pond, stock it with mosquito-eating fish. Contact the Heath Department for fish species information.
- Encourage and help your neighbors to eliminate breeding sites on their properties.
- Level the ground around your home so water can run off or absorb evenly and not collect in low spots.

## Mosquito Problems Start at Home!



### Don't Give Mosquitoes a Chance!

**Mosquitoes need water to breed and grow. It doesn't take much water or time. Almost anything that will hold water for one week or more can produce these pests. Many places around your home may be causing mosquito problems. Destroy or empty these places and mosquitoes won't have a "biting" chance!**

# PERSONAL PROTECTION

- Mosquitoes are most active at dawn, dusk and in the early morning; consider staying indoors during those times. If spending time outdoors, consider the safety precautions below.
- Consider wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants if outdoors during peak mosquito times.
- Apply DEET based or natural insect repellent sparingly to exposed skin. An effective repellent will contain 20% to 30% DEET; avoid products containing more than 30% DEET, as it may cause side effects, particularly in children.
- Repellents may irritate the eyes and mouth, so avoid applying repellent to the hands of children. Insect repellents should not be applied to children age 3 years and younger.
- Spray clothing with repellents containing permethrin or DEET, as mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing.
- Whenever you use an insecticide or insect repellent, be sure to read and follow the manufacturer's DIRECTIONS FOR USE, as printed on the product.
- Vitamin B and "ultrasonic" devices are NOT effective in preventing mosquito bites.