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Spring 2008

## **Precautions**

### **Reducing Your Risk of West Nile Virus**

#### **What can be done to reduce my chance of getting West Nile virus (WNV)?**

Everyone is encouraged to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes. This includes things like wearing insect repellent (personal precautions) and getting rid of places where mosquitoes can breed on your property: See the chart below.

#### **Personal precautions**

- If possible, avoid areas with mosquitoes or leave an area that has mosquitoes

#### **Protect Yourself Outdoors When Mosquitoes are Present**

- Be sure to take precautions when out at night, especially during dusk and dawn when mosquitoes tend to be most active.
- Wear light-coloured clothing, long-sleeved shirts, long pants, shoes and socks outdoors whenever possible.
- Make sure clothing is breathable and allows moisture to evaporate.
- Wear insect repellents

#### **Safe Insect Repellents Use**

- Follow product instructions.
- Apply only to clothing and exposed skin.
- Never use over cuts, wounds, sunburned or irritated skin.
- Wash repellent off daily.
- Some products are not recommended for children under three, check the instructions.
- Repellents containing DEET work best.
- Repellents containing 10% DEET or less are good for most uses. Higher concentrations of DEET last longer but are no more effective.
- Only use Health Canada approved repellents. This applies to DEET and alternatives to DEET such as soyabean oil, or p-menthane-3, 8-diol.

#### **Reducing mosquitoes in and around your house**

##### **Protect Yourself Indoors**

- Use fine-mesh screens on windows and doors.
- Make sure screens fit tightly and do not have holes.

**Eliminate Mosquito Breeding Sites**

- Do not allow water to collect in toys, garbage cans, plant containers, etc.
- Clean roof gutters, downspouts and eavestroughs regularly.
- Clean birdbaths at least once a week.
- Turn over plastic wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use.
- Eliminate discarded tires. If you must keep them, remove any standing water from the tires and store them covered or stand them on end and fill the inside with sand.
- Bubble ornamental garden ponds using an oxygenator.
- Change and empty water from outdoor dishes for animals daily.

The City has a WNV prevention program that includes monitoring for WNV in birds, mosquitoes and people, community outreach and mosquito reduction.

**For more information call 416-338-7600.**