



West Nile Virus Making Early Appearance This Summer

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Take Steps to Reduce Your Risk While Spending Time Outdoors

July 29, 2013 (St. Louis, Mo.) — Coming off an unprecedented resurgence of West Nile virus last year, public health officials are urging people to take precautions against the illness this summer while mosquitoes are at their most active. According to new data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a total of 29 states have already reported cases of the mosquito-borne virus this summer, including three deaths – with peak season of August and September yet to come.

West Nile virus is transmitted through bites from infected mosquitoes. Although only one in five people who contract the virus develop symptoms such as fever, headache, body aches or vomiting, the virus can cause serious neurological illnesses that can be fatal, such as encephalitis or meningitis. The 2012 West Nile virus outbreak was the deadliest on record since the illness was first detected in the United States in 1999: 5,674 cases of West Nile virus were reported nationwide, including 286 deaths. Health officials expect the disease to continue to be a formidable public health issue.

Because no human vaccine exists, preventing mosquito bites is the most effective way to avoid contracting West Nile virus:

- Most importantly, use a personal insect repellent, which the CDC recommends as a highly effective way to minimize risk.
- Reduce mosquitoes around your home by removing the places they might breed. Several times per week, empty water from flower pots, bird baths, barrels and pet dishes. Using a do-it-yourself spray insecticide formulated for mosquito control, such as Cutter® Backyard™ Bug Control Spray Concentrate, is also effective. Spray over the entire yard, including ornamental trees, shrubs and flowers, for up to two months of residual protection from nuisance pests.
- Cover swimming pools, and make sure you're not allowing water to collect on the top of your swimming pool cover. Clean out leaves or debris from rain gutters.
- Keep mosquitoes outside by inspecting screens on windows and weather stripping on doors and repairing if needed.
- Avoid overwatering your lawn – your grass should be getting about 1 inch of water per week from a combination of rain and watering. If your lawn remains soggy for several hours after watering or water is pooling on the surface, you have too much moisture.
- When you're outdoors, wear long sleeves and pants at dawn and dusk; mosquito activity is highest at these times.

Choosing the Right Repellent

Although using any repellent will work to reduce your risk of West Nile virus, choosing the right active ingredient for your individual needs can make repelling mosquitoes a painless process. When picking an insect repellent, consider the length of time you'll be outside and the type of activity you're planning. There are a variety of insect repellents available, ranging from the familiar DEET to newer ingredients like oil of lemon eucalyptus.

- **DEET:** DEET has been used as an insect repellent in the United States for more than 50 years. It's recommended for those spending longer periods of time outdoors in more heavily infested conditions. Recommended by the CDC for effective, long-lasting protection, DEET-based products are available in a wide variety of application methods, including aerosols, sprays or wipes. Length of protection ranges from two to 10 hours (depending on the percentage of DEET in the product). Unscented Backwoods Cutter® Insect Repellents, for example, contain 23 percent DEET for up to 10 hours of sweat-resistant protection against mosquitoes. Formulas with 30 percent concentrations or lower, such as Cutter® All Family® Insect Repellents with 7 percent DEET, can be used on children ages 2 months and older.
- **Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus:** Derived from the leaves of the *Eucalyptus citriodora* tree, oil of lemon eucalyptus naturally repels mosquitoes for up to six hours. You can use oil of lemon eucalyptus-based products, like Cutter® Lemon Eucalyptus Insect Repellent, on children 3 years and older.
- **Geraniol:** A natural ingredient derived from geranium oil, geraniol utilizes the inherent repellent properties of the geranium to repel mosquitoes and other nuisance pests for hours. Cutter® Natural Insect Repellent contains geraniol for hours of protection from mosquitoes for the entire family.

For more information about West Nile virus and ways to protect against mosquitoes, visit www.cdc.gov/westnile. To learn more about Cutter products, visit www.cutterinsectrepellent.com.

About United Industries

United Industries Corporation, a subsidiary of Spectrum Brands Holdings, Inc., is the leading manufacturer of value-brand consumer products for the home, lawn and garden insect and weed control markets in the United States. The company offers innovative products of outstanding quality, so consumers benefit from easier insect and weed control solutions. The brands — Spectracide®, Garden Safe®, Hot Shot®, Cutter®, Repel® and Black Flag® — are well recognized by consumers for delivering exceptional value and trusted results. For more information, visit www.UnitedIndustriesCorporation.com

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