



Fight The Bite

Mississippi Schools

The Mississippi Department of Health urges all Mississippians to avoid mosquito bites whenever possible. The risk of a healthy person getting West Nile virus from a mosquito bite is very low, but protection remains important for everyone.

Everyone should know. . .

- West Nile virus is transmitted *primarily* through the bite of an infected mosquito. However, there have been isolated cases occurring in blood transfusions and organ donation recipients, from mother to baby during pregnancy, and through breast milk. People cannot become infected through ordinary contact with an infected bird, horse or human.
- No vaccine exists to protect humans against West Nile virus. Individuals must personally *Fight the Bite*.

A Message For Parents & Students:

- Avoid mosquitoes whenever possible.
- Stay indoors or take personal protective measures, especially between dusk and dawn.
- Use mosquito repellent with DEET (up to 30 percent for adults and 10 percent or less for children two years to 12 years of age, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics). **Follow the label directions.** For more information, see the brochures **Insect Repellents** and **Deet Tips: Deciding on Their Use**.
- Wear long-sleeved, long-legged clothing with socks and shoes outdoors when practical.

A Message For Classroom Teachers:

- The Internet provides instant access to volumes of information about West Nile virus.
- You can find the latest Mississippi facts about West Nile virus at www.HealthyMS.com.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website also offers information: www.cdc.gov.
- Allowing students outdoors for recess poses no greater risk to West Nile virus than if they were outside at home – just be wary of mosquitoes.

A Message For Activities & Athletic Directors & Staff:

- Early morning, near dusk, and after dark events pose a potential risk for you, your students, and other people attending or participating. These are the times when mosquitoes are most likely to be out feeding.
- You can help protect students and spectators from West Nile virus infection.
- Work with your school's administration and the safety officer to eliminate standing, stagnant water: a prime breeding ground for mosquitoes.
- Talk to local mosquito control officials about pre-event surveillance and control of both larvae and adult mosquitoes.
- Remind students and spectators of the importance of using DEET repellent products according to the directions on the label. Encourage them to wear long sleeves and long pants if possible.

- Encourage children to participate in clean-up campaigns at school. They can do the same at their homes.
- At events, remind the crowd to protect themselves and their communities by helping eliminate mosquito-breeding areas.
- ***Fight The Bite*** through communication: keep your folks informed and aware.

A Message For Administrators:

- Reduce the mosquito breeding sources – the most effective and economical method toward long-term mosquito control.
- Check for and rid your campus of easily recognized mosquito breeding areas: containers of stagnant water, especially cans near cafeteria exteriors; used tires; gutters; grassy ditches and pools of standing, stagnant water, especially with organic debris; and construction sites or vocational-technical arenas that might harbor standing water.
- Communicate to your faculty, staff and students – make sure they know how to protect themselves and what you're doing to assure a safe campus.
- Contact your local mosquito control officials or city public works department for information about mosquito control in your area.
- Consider scheduling outside events during daylight hours rather than in the evening.

WHEN USING REPELLENTS, ALWAYS FOLLOW THE LABEL DIRECTIONS AND KEEP OUT OF THE REACH OF SMALL CHILDREN (MAY BE TOXIC IF INGESTED).

POISON CONTROL: 1-800-222-1222



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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570 East Woodrow Wilson • Post Office Box 1700 • Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1700
 (601) 576-7400 • WNV Hotline 1-877-WST-NILE or 1-877-978-6453 • www.msdh.state.ms.us