

Infectious Diseases

Series

1



WEST NILE VIRUS



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West Nile virus was first found in the United States in New York City in 1999. Since then it has spread throughout the United States. This virus can cause illness and sometimes fatal brain infection in people, horses, birds, and other animals. You get West Nile virus by being bitten by an infected mosquito, but there is no evidence to suggest that it can be spread from person to person or from animal to person. If you get infected with West Nile virus, you may have a bad headache, be sick to your stomach, and be very tired. You can reduce your chances of getting infected with West Nile virus by protecting yourself from mosquito bites. To avoid mosquito bites, eliminate sources of standing water like old cans or unused swimming pools from around your home, wear long-sleeved shirts and pants, and apply bug repellent on your skin and clothing when you are outdoors and mosquitoes are biting, especially in the evening, at night, and in the early morning.