
Media Release



First human case of West Nile Virus in Timiskaming District July 26, 2017 - For immediate release

'Residents reminded to take precautions against mosquito bites'

New Liskeard, ON (July 26, 2017) - The Timiskaming Health Unit is investigating its first reported human case of West Nile Virus (WNV) acquired in the Timiskaming District. This is also the first reported human case of WNV in Ontario this year.

"A human case of WNV is unusual for our district," said Dr. Marlene Spruyt, acting medical officer of health, Timiskaming Health Unit "Mosquito surveillance has indicated we have very few of the species that carry the infection and normally it takes warmer weather to cause the virus to multiply in mosquitoes. While we have had crows test positive for the virus in past years, we have not detected the virus in any of our mosquito pools since 2004."

Residents and visitors are reminded to take precautions against mosquito bites by:

- wearing protective clothing, such as light coloured clothing and long sleeves that covers exposed skin
- using mosquito repellent containing DEET when outdoors at dawn and dusk
- preventing mosquito entry into the home

The risk of exposure to WNV around the home can be reduced by eliminating mosquito breeding sites, including stagnant water in places such as bird baths, eaves troughs, flower pots and discarded tires.

WNV is transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito. Symptoms usually develop 2 to 14 days after receiving a bite from an infected mosquito. The majority of people infected with WNV do not develop any symptoms. Those who do become ill usually experience mild flu-like symptoms such as fever, headache, skin rash or muscle aches. Less than 1% of people infected with the virus become seriously ill. The greatest risk for serious illness is in elderly and immune compromised individuals.

For more information about WNV visit: <http://www.timiskaminghu.com/406/West-Nile-Virus>