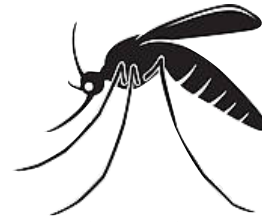


Mosquitoes



Mosquitoes can carry many diseases, including West Nile Virus (WNV) Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE), and Zika virus (Zika). The species of mosquitoes that carry WNV and EEE are found in Rhode Island and bite from late May until the first heavy frost (usually the end of October). Although the species of mosquito believed to transmit Zika virus are not established in Rhode Island, individual mosquitoes have occasionally been found in traps here.

But mosquitoes do not have to ruin your summer. There are some simple things everyone can do to protect themselves from mosquito bites and to help get rid of mosquito breeding grounds.

Protect yourself.

- Put screens on windows and doors. Fix screens that are loose or have holes.
- At sunrise and sundown (when mosquitoes that carry WNV or EEE are most active), minimize outside activities. If you must be outside, wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants and use bug spray.
- Use EPA-approved bug spray with one of the following active ingredients: DEET (20%-30% strength); picaridin; IR3535; and oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthan-diol. Always read the label and follow all directions and precautions.
- Do not use bug spray with DEET on infants younger than two months of age. Children should be careful not to rub their eyes after bug spray has been applied on their skin. Wash children's hands with soap and water to remove any bug spray when they return indoors.
- Put mosquito netting over playpens and baby carriages.
- If you are traveling to an area with Zika virus, be aware of the species of mosquitoes that carry Zika are active throughout the day (dawn through dusk). For a regularly-updated list of areas with active mosquito-borne transmission of Zika virus, visit www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/active-countries.html
- If you are pregnant or trying to become pregnant, you and your partner should postpone your travel to areas with Zika, if possible. Discuss any necessary travel plans with your doctor.

Get rid of mosquito breeding grounds.

- Get rid of anything around your house or yard that collects water. Just one cup of water can produce hundreds of mosquitoes, and an unused tire containing water can produce thousands of mosquitoes!
- Clean gutters and down spouts regularly so that they can drain properly.
- Remove any water from unused swimming pools, wading pools, boats, planters, trash and recycling bins, tires, and anything else that collects water, and cover them.

What Else Should I Know?

West Nile virus infects birds.

In nature, West Nile virus cycles between mosquitoes and birds. Some infected birds can develop high levels of the virus in their bloodstream and mosquitoes can become infected by biting these infected birds. Some, but not all infected birds get sick and die of disease. One way health officials conduct surveillance for West Nile virus is by testing local birds. Finding dead birds may be a sign that West Nile virus is circulating between birds and the mosquitoes in an area. By reporting dead birds to state and local health departments, you can play an important role in monitoring West Nile virus. State and local agencies have different policies for collecting and testing birds, so check with your county or state health department to find information about reporting dead birds in your area.

If you find a dead bird: Don't handle the body with your bare hands. Contact your local health department for instructions on reporting and disposing of the body. They may tell you to dispose of the bird after they log your report.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/westnile, or call CDC at 800-CDC-INFO (English and Spanish) or 888-232-6348 (TTY).

- Remove or treat any shallow water that can accumulate on top of a pool cover. Larvicide treatments, such as Mosquito Dunks, can be applied to kill immature mosquitoes. This environmentally-friendly product is available at many hardware and garden stores and online.
- Change the water in birdbaths at least two times a week, and rinse out birdbaths once a week.
- Encourage neighbors, friends, and family to do the same things.

For additional prevention tips, visit the Rhode Island Department of Health's website at www.health.ri.gov.