



WEST NILE VIRUS

Personal Protection and Prevention

How can I lower the risk of becoming infected with West Nile Virus?

- Avoid areas with large numbers of mosquitoes.
- Consider staying indoors from dusk to dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Wear light-coloured clothing, including long sleeves, long pants, socks and a hat **whenever you are outdoors** (even when you are in your back yard) especially from dusk to dawn.
- Check all window and door screens in your home to ensure there are no tears or holes for mosquitoes to get through.

Use insect repellent

It is important to choose a repellent that you are likely to use consistently and that will provide sufficient protection for the amount of time that you will be outdoors.

Only use insect repellents that are registered in Canada. There are numerous products on the market including ones that contain DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide) and others that are DEET-free. If you use a product that contains DEET, Health Canada recommends that it contain less than 30 per cent DEET for adults and less than 10 per cent DEET for children. Read the labels carefully to determine if it is the right product for you.

- Always read and follow the directions on the product label.
- Before first use, check for skin sensitivity to the insect repellent by applying it to a small area of skin on the arm. Wait 24 hours to see if there are any adverse reactions, such as itching or redness.
- Apply insect repellent sparingly on exposed skin and on the surface of thin clothing. There is no need to apply to skin under clothing.
- Do not use insect repellent on open wounds or irritated or sunburned skin.
- Do not get insect repellent in your eyes. If this happens, rinse with water right away.
- Avoid breathing mist from spray-type repellents. Apply in a well-ventilated area. Do not spray near food. Never apply spray inside a tent.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke while applying an insect repellent. Wash treated skin with soap and water when you return indoors or when protection is no longer needed.
- If you suspect that you are reacting to an insect repellent, stop using the product immediately, wash treated skin and seek medical attention. When you go to the doctor, take the product container with you.
- Keep all insect repellent out of the reach of children.

Clean up around the house

Mosquitoes breed in stagnant water that is present for more than a week. Here is what you can do to help minimize the mosquito breeding grounds around your home:

- Recycle/dispose of old tires, plastic containers, paint cans or other containers that can hold water
- Drain water regularly from rain barrels and swimming pool covers
- Make sure your eavestroughs, flowerpots, window boxes and planters drain properly
- Change the water in bird baths at least once a week
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling and trash containers to allow water to drain
- Turn over all yard items including wheelbarrows, canoes, toys and plastic wading pools to drain standing water
- Remind or help your neighbours to eliminate breeding sites on their properties
- If you are using a barrel to collect rainwater for your plants and garden, cover it with a screen to prevent mosquitoes from breeding in it

What is the Region of Peel doing about WNV?

The Region of Peel has developed a Vector-Borne Disease Prevention Plan to deal with WNV. Activities outlined in the WNV component of the plan include public education, monitoring for WNV in people and the environment and implementing measures to reduce mosquito breeding. The plan is available at www.peel-bugbite.ca.

Where can I find more information about WNV?

For more information about WNV and the Region of Peel's Vector-Borne Disease Prevention Plan, call

905-799-7700

**from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday
Caledon residents call toll-free at 905-584-2216.**

peel-bugbite.ca