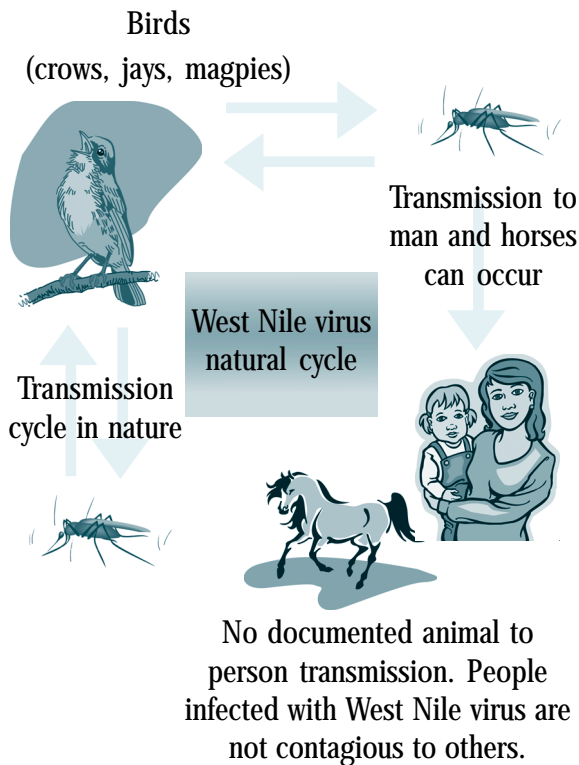


## Mosquitoes and Disease

Mosquitoes are flying insects that feed on the blood of mammals. Mosquito bites can cause irritation through an allergic reaction to the mosquito's saliva. This is what causes the red bump and itching. Mosquitoes can transmit several diseases to humans and animals. These diseases include encephalitis and pet heartworm.



## What about the West Nile Virus?

- West Nile virus is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito and can infect people, horses, and birds, such as crows, jays and magpies.
- About 1 in 5 people who are bitten by mosquitoes carrying the West Nile virus develop mild symptoms.
- About 1 in 150 people who are infected develop severe neurological disease. West Nile virus infection can result in a sometimes fatal illness known as West Nile encephalitis (an inflammation of the brain). The risk of severe disease is higher for people older than 50.
- There is no current evidence to suggest that West Nile virus can be spread by person to person contact or from birds or animals to people.
- Public Health in Oregon is monitoring the West Nile virus and will keep the public informed.



## Mosquito Control



### What you can do to help



Washington County  
 Dept. of Health & Human Services  
 Environmental Health  
 155 N. 1st Ave, MS 5  
 Hillsboro OR 97124-3072  
 Phone: 503.846.8722  
 Fax: 503.846.4490  
 TTY: 503.846.4598  
[www.co.washington.or.us/health](http://www.co.washington.or.us/health)

## Reduce mosquitoes around your home

Reduce environmental risks. Mosquitoes need water to breed. They lay their eggs in small amounts of standing water. Help reduce their numbers:

- Repair outside plumbing leaks and shut faucets tightly.
- Store pails, buckets, and any other water-holding containers upside down.
- Store wading or kiddie pools inside when not in use.
- Adjust tarps, grill covers, and swimming pool covers to eliminate low spots that collect water.
- Discard cans, bottles, jars, and their lids appropriately.
- Store wheelbarrows upside down when not in use.
- Fill puddles that last for more than two days after a rain storm with sand, earth or sod.
- Change the water in birdbaths every 2-3 days.
- Fill tree knotholes with cement.
- Discard old tires appropriately.
- Report illegal dumping.
- Treat water in ornamental ponds with an approved chemical.
- Replace your outdoor lights with yellow "bug" lights.

Dead crows, jays, or magpies in an area may indicate that West Nile virus is circulating between the birds and the mosquitoes in that area.

The public can play an important role in helping to monitor for West Nile virus. If dead birds are observed in the community, contact Washington County's Department of Health & Human Services at 503.846.8722 for local policies regarding the collection and testing of dead birds.

Sources: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov); [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

## Protect yourself from mosquitoes

- Consider staying indoors at dawn and in the early evening, which are peak mosquito biting times.
- Use head nets, long sleeves and long pants if you venture into areas with high mosquito populations, such as salt marshes.
- Make sure windows and doors are screened and "bug tight".

