go ahead fight the bite

You can protect yourself against West Nile virus and Eastern equine encephalitis

- Wear long sleeves and long pants.
- Use repellent on skin and clothes.
- Take extra precautions at dusk and dawn.
- Use screens on your windows and doors
- Drain artificial sources of standing water where you live, work and play.

For more information about mosquito-borne diseases visit **www.mainepublichealth.gov**

Department of Health and Human Services
Maine People Living Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives
Paul R. LePage, Governor
Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner

Eastern Equine Encephalitis
Fact Sheet

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
An Office of the Department of Health and Human Services

Paul R. LePage, Governor Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner

What is Eastern equine encephalitis?
Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) is a rare but serious disease that is caused by a virus that can cause inflammation of the brain. It can infect humans, horses, birds, and other animals.

How is the EEE virus spread?
The EEE virus is spread through the bite of an infected mosquito. The disease is not directly passed from person-to-person or from horse-to-horse.

What are the symptoms of EEE?
People with mild cases of EEE experience fever, chills, body and muscle pain, and general weakness. Severe cases of EEE infection begin with sudden onset of high fever (103° to 106°F), headache, stiff neck, chills and vomiting. The illness may then progress to altered mental status, seizures, and inflammation of the brain. The disease quickly worsens and can lead to coma and death. Around one third of the patients who get EEE die, and many of those who survive have mild to severe brain damage.

Who is at risk for infection with the EEE virus?
Anyone who lives in or visits an area where EEE virus is circulating is at risk for infection. Persons over the age of 50 and under the age of 15 are at greatest risk for severe illness following infection.

How soon do people infected with EEE get sick?
Symptoms of EEE usually begin 4 to 10 days after a bite from an infected mosquito.

How is EEE diagnosed?
EEE can only be diagnosed by a health-care provider. If you think that you or a family member have signs of illness compatible with EEE you should speak with your provider as soon as possible. If your provider thinks you have EEE, he or she will take samples of blood and cerebral spinal fluid to be tested for EEE.

What is the treatment for EEE?
There is no specific treatment for EEE. Severe illnesses are treated by supportive therapy which may include hospitalization, respiratory support, and intravenous fluids. These treatments help to relieve the symptoms of EEE infection.

Is there a vaccine for EEE?
Currently there is no human vaccine approved for EEE. There is an effective vaccine for horses that can be obtained by contacting a licensed veterinarian.

What can I do to protect myself from EEE infection?
The best way to prevent EEE is to avoid being bitten by the mosquitoes that transmit the disease.

- Use an EPA approved repellent when outdoors. Always follow the instructions on the label
- Wear long-sleeved shirts, pants, and socks when outdoors
- Use screens on your windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out of your house
- Get rid of places where mosquitoes can lay their eggs by draining standing water around your house
- Take extra care to avoid mosquito bites in hardwood swamps and woodland habitats where there is greater potential for exposure to infected mosquitoes

Where can I get more information?
For more information contact your healthcare provider or local health center. You can also contact the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention by calling 1-800-821-5821 or visiting the website http://www.mainepublichealth.gov. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website - http://www.cdc.gov – is another excellent source of health information.

West Nile Virus
Fact Sheet

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Paul R. LePage, Governor Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner

What is West Nile virus?
West Nile virus (WNV) is a potentially serious viral illness that is spread through the bite of an infected mosquito. In a small number of cases, WNV has been spread through blood transfusions, organ transplants, breastfeeding, and from mother to baby during pregnancy.

What are the symptoms of WNV?
Most people who are infected with WNV will not show any signs of illness. Some people (up to 20%) who are infected will have mild symptoms such as fever, head and body aches, nausea, rash, and swollen glands. A small percentage of people infected with WNV will develop serious illness with symptoms that can include high fever, altered mental status, neck stiffness, convulsions, coma, and sometimes death.

How soon do people infected with WNV get sick?
People usually begin to show signs of illness 3 to 15 days after a bite from an infected mosquito.

How is WNV diagnosed?
WNV can only be diagnosed by a health-care provider. If you think you have signs of illness compatible with WNV you should speak with your provider as soon as possible. If your provider thinks you have WNV, he or she will take samples of blood and cerebral spinal fluid to be tested for WNV.

What is the treatment for WNV?
There is no specific treatment for WNV. Most people who are infected recover without treatment. Severe WNV illness usually requires supportive treatment in the hospital. This treatment can include intravenous fluids, help with breathing, and nursing care.

Is there a vaccine to prevent WNV?
No, currently there is no vaccine available to prevent WNV.

What can I do to protect myself from WNV infection?
The best way to avoid WNV is to avoid being bitten by the mosquitoes that transmit the disease.

- Use an EPA approved repellent when outdoors. Always follow the instructions on the label
- Wear long-sleeved shirts, pants, and socks when outdoors
- Use screens on your windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out of your house
- Avoid being outdoors at dawn or dusk when many mosquitoes are most active
- Get rid of places where mosquitoes can lay their eggs by draining standing water around your house

Why do people talk about dead birds and WNV?
Mosquitoes become infected with WNV when they feed on infected birds. Some birds become very sick and die in large numbers from the WNV infection.

What should I do if I find group of 3 or more dead birds?
Do not touch the birds with your bare hands. Contact Maine CDC for instructions on how to report and safely dispose of the birds.

Where can I get more information?
For more information contact your healthcare provider or local health center. You can also contact the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention by calling 1-800-821-5821 or visiting the website http://www.mainepublichealth.gov. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website - http://www.cdc.gov – is another excellent source of health information.