West Nile Virus Confirmed in Hyannis

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The Director of the Town of Barnstable Public Health Division received notification that a sample taken from pool of mosquitoes collected in Hyannis on August 18, 2015 has tested positive for West Nile Virus. Cape Cod Mosquito Control will be going out and treating the catch basins in the area and looking around and treating any other areas where they find mosquitoes.

WNV was initially found in mosquitoes in Massachusetts in the year 2000. West Nile virus primarily affects birds. There have been no birds or humans who tested positive for West Nile Virus in Barnstable so far this year.

While WNV can infect people of all ages, people over the age of 50 are at higher risk for severe infection. WNV is most commonly transmitted to humans by the bite of a mosquito infected with the virus. The Town of Barnstable Public Health Division and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) recommend that the public take action now to avoid mosquito bites and reduce mosquito populations around their home and neighborhoods.

- Limit your time outdoors during peak periods of mosquito activity (dusk and dawn) or if you must remain outdoors, wear a long-sleeved shirt and long pants.
- Use a mosquito repellent that contains DEET (the chemical N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) and follow the directions on the label. Products containing DEET should not be used on children less than 2 months of age and should be used in concentrations of 30% or lower for older children and adults. Higher concentrations of DEET may provide protection for a longer period of time, but do not provide a higher level of protection. If you are concerned about exposures to chemicals, use the lowest concentration of DEET which provides protection for the length of time you will be exposed to mosquitoes, and wash your skin when you return indoors.
- Take special care to cover up the arms and legs of children playing outdoors. When you bring a baby outdoors, cover the baby’s carriage or playpen with mosquito netting.
- Fix any holes in your screens and make sure they are tightly attached to all your doors and windows.
- Remove any standing water around your home that is available for mosquito breeding. Mosquitoes will begin to breed in any puddle or standing water that lasts for more than four days. Make sure water does not collect and stagnate in ceramic pots, trash cans, recycling containers, old tires, wading pools, bird baths, etc. Remove leaves and debris that may prevent drainage of roof gutters.

While the Town of Barnstable Public Health Division continues to work closely with the MDPH and other agencies, locally, we are actively undertaking educational dissemination of information while Cape Cod Mosquito Control will continue to treat catch basins with larvacides in targeted areas.

Information about WNV and reports of WNV activity in Massachusetts during 2015 can be found on the MDPH website at [www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito](http://www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito)
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