



**Aspetuck
Health District**

CONTACT:

Mark A.R. Cooper, MPH RS
Director of Health
203.227.9571
mcooper@aspetuckhd.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 27, 2024



Mark A.R. Cooper, Director of Health for the Aspetuck Health District stated today that West Nile Virus has now been found in mosquitoes trapped in Westport and Easton. The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station maintains a network of 108 mosquito trapping stations in 88 municipalities throughout the State and begins mosquito trapping and testing in June and continues into October. West Nile Virus continues to expand throughout the State with positive mosquitos now being found in over 26 municipalities.

Mr. Cooper stated that “the frequent rainstorms and hot temperatures provide ideal conditions for the mosquito population to increase, which also increases the risk of human infection”.

The mosquito species trapped so far in Westport and Easton have been Culex Pipiens, an opportunistic blood feeder, primarily of birds. These mosquitoes typically remain close to their development sites and have a limited flight range of less than one-quarter mile. As the season progresses, other mosquito species that tend to bite people also acquire the virus. The risk of infection continues until the first frost which reduces the mosquito population.

The good news is that there has been only one reported case of West Nile Virus in Connecticut so far this season.

The Health District recommends residents take the following precautions:

- Eliminate any object outside that can hold water and become a breeding place for mosquitoes.
- Clean house gutters that may be retaining water.
- Empty wading pools and bird baths every few days.
- Chlorinate swimming pools regularly.
- Make sure the covers that are on grills, boats, pools, and other equipment do not collect water.
- Be sure door and window screens are tight fitting and in good repair to avoid mosquito bites when indoors.

Tips for avoiding mosquito bites when outdoors:

Mosquitoes require a blood meal for reproduction. The following are measures that can help reduce bites from mosquitoes that feed on people:

- Be particularly careful at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Wear shoes, socks, long pants, and long-sleeved shirts. Clothing material should be tightly woven.
- Use mosquito netting when sleeping outdoors.
- Consider the use of CDC- recommended mosquito repellents, containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, IR3535, or 2-undecanone, and apply according to directions when outdoors.
- When using DEET, use the lowest concentration effective for the time spent outdoors (for example, 6 percent lasts approximately two hours and 20 percent for four hours) and wash treated skin when returning indoors. Do not apply under clothing, to wounds or irritated skin, the hands of children, or to infants less than two months old.

For more information on West Nile Virus, visit the Health District's Web site at www.aspetuckhd.org and/or the Connecticut Mosquito Management Program Web site at www.ct.gov/mosquito.