



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Ashtabula City Health Department

August 24, 2023

The Ashtabula City Health was notified Thursday August 24, 2023 of a positive batch of mosquito pools collected for West Nile Virus were identified by the Ohio Department of Health's Laboratory from surveillance samples collected on August 10, 2023 within the City of Ashtabula. The Ashtabula City Health Department regularly performs mosquito surveillance activities in the summer season. This involves trapping mosquitoes locally and shipping specimens for identification and testing.

Ohio Health Officials say 31 Ohio counties have reported West Nile Virus activity in mosquitoes tested in statewide surveillance efforts. As of today in Ohio, there have been zero human cases of West Nile Virus and zero veterinary equine cases. Last year Ohio reported 7 human West Nile virus cases and 3 West Nile virus veterinary equine cases.

West Nile Virus disease is most often transmitted between May and October. Up to 20 percent of people who become infected will have symptoms that can last for a few days to as long as several weeks and include: fever, headache, body aches, nausea, vomiting, swollen lymph glands and a rash on the chest, stomach or back. About one in 150 people infected with West Nile virus will develop severe illness that may last several weeks, and neurologic effects may be permanent. Symptoms of severe illness can include: high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness and paralysis (courtesy of Ohio Department of Health).

The Ashtabula City Health Department urges our residents to "Fight the Bite" and take precautions to lower your risk for bites from mosquitoes this summer and fall season. To avoid mosquito bites and prevent mosquito borne diseases, the Ashtabula City Health Department and Ohio Department of Health suggests:

- **Cover up with clothing** - wear long pants, long sleeved shirt, shoes & socks. Light colored clothes are less attractive to mosquitos.
- **Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered insect repellents** - always follow the product label instructions. If you use sunscreen, put sunscreen on first and insect repellent second. It is safe for pregnant or nursing women to use EPA approved repellents if applied according to package label instructions.
- **Keep mosquitoes outside** - keep screens on all windows and repair holes in screens. Keep doors & windows shut and use air conditioning whenever possible.
- **Stop mosquitoes from breeding** - mosquitoes breed by laying eggs in and near standing water. At least once a week empty, turn over or cover anything that could hold water (ie, toys, buckets, flowerpots, pools, birdbaths, pet dishes) put away or dispose of items that are outside and not being used because they could hold standing water (ie, tires).

Ashtabula City Health Department has available through an EPA Grant, free residential mosquito larvicide tablets for outdoor use. These tablets contain a natural soil bacterium that kills the mosquito larvae in standing water where adult mosquitos breed. These can be used around your home for standing water in small areas that cannot be removed such as garden ponds, fish ponds, water gardens, rain barrels, fountains and roof gutters. Residents can pick them up at the Ashtabula City Health Department at 4717 Main Avenue, Ashtabula open from 8:00 to 12:30 and 1:30 to 4:30 phone 440-992-7121.

For more information on mosquitoes: www.odh.ohio.gov and www.cdc.gov/westnile/.