

# ILLNESSES SPREAD BY MOSQUITOES IN WISCONSIN

Eastern equine encephalitis  
Jamestown Canyon virus  
La Crosse encephalitis  
Saint Louis encephalitis  
West Nile Virus

The illnesses listed above can spread when an infected mosquito bites a human and transmits the disease. These infections are most common in Wisconsin during the months of May through September, when mosquitoes are most active. Anyone can get sick from an illness transmitted by a mosquito, but risk is highest in children, the elderly, and anyone with a compromised immune system.



## What causes them?

- ▶ Mosquitoes can get a virus by feeding on infected animals and can then spread it to humans by biting them. The risk for mosquito transmitted diseases is greatest during warm summer months.
- ▶ These diseases transmitted by mosquitoes are rarely spread person-to-person. However, there have been cases of illness being spread through blood transfusions or organ transplants.
- ▶ Once a person has had a certain mosquito-transmitted disease, they usually cannot get that disease again.



## What are the signs and symptoms?

Most people infected with a virus spread by mosquitoes never know they are infected. When someone does have symptoms they usually occur 5 to 15 days after being bitten by the mosquito and may include:

### Mild Symptoms

- ▶ Fever
- ▶ Headache
- ▶ Body aches
- ▶ Vomiting
- ▶ Skin rash
- ▶ Fatigue

### Severe Symptoms

- ▶ High fever
- ▶ Shakiness
- ▶ Confusion
- ▶ Coma
- ▶ Seizure
- ▶ Paralysis
- ▶ Inflammation (swelling) of the brain



## What are the treatment options?

There is no vaccine or drug treatment for these illnesses spread by mosquitoes. Over-the-counter pain medications can be used to reduce fever and ease symptoms. Severe cases may require hospitalization for fluids, pain medications, and nursing care.

Please see other side for prevention tips!





## How can these diseases be prevented?

*Follow these steps to reduce your risk of being bitten by a mosquito:*

- ▶ Wear insect repellent with 20–30% DEET, 10–20% picaridin, 10–20% IR3535, or 30–40% OLE. Use 0.5% permethrin on clothes. Find the right [repellent for you](#) on the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) website. Follow directions on manufacturer's label.
- ▶ When outdoors, wear a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, high socks, and closed-toe shoes. Use insect repellent on clothes since mosquitoes can bite through clothing.
- ▶ Use screens on windows and doors of your home, and check that there are no holes in them.
- ▶ Get rid of standing water around your home where mosquitoes can breed. At least once a week, empty and scrub, cover, or throw out items that hold water, such as tires, buckets, birdbaths, or pet bowls. Make sure to regularly unclog roof gutters as well.
- ▶ Limit time spent outdoors at dawn and dusk from May to September, or when mosquitoes are most active.

