



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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FIRST HUMAN CASE OF WEST NILE VIRUS REPORTED *Individual Receiving Treatment; County Continues Surveillance*

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) reports the first human case of West Nile virus (WNV) in San Diego County this year.

The individual, a man in his 50s, had fever, rash and muscle weakness and is currently hospitalized. The man has residences in San Diego County and in Long Beach. The patient's family requested that no further information be given. WNV is transmitted to humans and animals via mosquitoes, which become infected after feeding on infected birds.

"At this time, we can't be sure where the individual contracted West Nile," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., San Diego County Deputy Public Health Officer. "Because of the patient's condition, we have been unable to conduct a detailed interview to determine if he recently traveled outside San Diego County or Long Beach."

The public can protect against WNV by limiting outdoor activity at dawn and dusk, wearing long sleeves and pants, using insect repellent with DEET, removing standing water from the perimeter of homes, and ensuring that windows and doors have tight fitting screens with no holes. Most people infected with the virus have no symptoms, although a few will develop fever, skin rashes, headaches and body aches. People over age 50 and those with compromised immune systems are at risk of developing more serious symptoms, such as meningitis, encephalitis, or paralysis.

HHSA will continue surveillance of local emergency departments and clinics, and the Department of Environmental Health (DEH)'s Vector Control will continue its surveillance and control activities, including trapping mosquitoes, and testing sentinel chickens and collecting dead birds for testing. For more information on WNV, visit the County's Web site at www.SDFightTheBite.com. Citizens are encouraged to call Vector Control to report mosquito breeding or dead birds at (888) 551-INFO (4636).

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