



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
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Lyndi Warner, Public Information Officer
pio@kalcounty.com
269-373-5271

Confirmed Human Case of West Nile Virus in Kalamazoo County

KALAMAZOO, MI— The Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department has confirmed one human case of West Nile Virus (WNV) in a Kalamazoo County Resident on Wednesday, September 26, 2018.

WNV is carried by certain types of mosquitoes and is a potentially serious disease that can affect anyone. The risk of bites from infected mosquitoes is highest for people who work or play outdoors and continues until freezing temperatures arrive. Wearing insect repellent when outdoors, especially at dawn and dusk, is important to prevent WNV.

“Mosquitoes continue to bite during the day and night, live indoors and outdoors, and search for warm places as temperatures begin to drop. Some will seek out enclosed spaces, like garages, sheds, and under (or inside) homes to survive cold temperatures,” said Jim Rutherford, Health Officer of Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department.

Most people who become infected with WNV have no clinical symptoms of illness, but some may become sick three to 15 days after the bite of an infected mosquito. About one in five infected persons will have a mild illness which may include fever, headache, body aches, joint pain, vomiting, diarrhea or rash. About one in 150 infected people will become severely ill, and may experience symptoms such as a stiff neck, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, muscle weakness, convulsions, and paralysis. More serious complications are associated with neurological illnesses, like meningitis and encephalitis. People 60 and older are more susceptible to severe WNV disease symptoms.

The most effective way to reduce your risk of mosquito bites and WNV is to follow the 3 R’s:

- **Remove** – Eliminate opportunities for mosquitoes to breed outside your home in pools of standing water. Once a week, dump water that is collecting outside in buckets, flowerpots, toys, kiddie pools, pet bowls, spare tires, etc. Keep gutters clean and free of debris.
- **Repel** – Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved insect repellents when outdoors, such as those containing the active ingredient DEET. Always follow the directions on the label. Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- **Repair** – Keep mosquitoes outside. Make sure your doors and windows have tightly fitting screens. Repair any tears or other openings. Use air conditioning when possible.

More information can be found at www.michigan.gov/westnilevirus.

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Kalamazoo County Government
Health & Community Services Department

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HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

311 E. Alcott St. | Kalamazoo, MI 49001

Phone: 269.373.5200 | www.kalcounty.com/hcs