

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, July 28, 2017, Peterborough

West Nile Virus Confirmed in Local Mosquitoes

Peterborough Public Health (PPH) is advising the public that mosquitoes in the City of Peterborough have tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). The mosquitoes were trapped from July 17 to 19, 2017.

This is the first positive mosquito pool found in Peterborough this year. During the summer months and early fall, PPH sets five traps weekly; three traps are in fixed locations and two others rotate throughout the Peterborough City and County.

“Now that we’ve identified mosquitoes carrying West Nile Virus in our area, it’s especially important that residents take care to prevent mosquito bites,” said Wanda Tonus, Public Health Inspector. “This is a good reminder for residents to eliminate any standing water in their yards and to take personal protective measures to avoid mosquito bites.”

Ms. Tonus noted that the majority of WNV cases do not show symptoms. About 20% of infected people will experience mild illness with such symptoms as fever, headache, and body aches, occasionally with a skin rash and swollen lymph nodes that last several days. Other symptoms may include nausea, vomiting, or eye pain. Symptoms usually develop 2 to 14 days after receiving a bite from an infected mosquito. Less than 1% of infected people will develop neurological symptoms.

Although the risk of becoming infected is low, prevention against bites is the best protection. Individuals can protect themselves from bites in several ways:

- Cover up when going outside between the hours of dusk and dawn. Remember to wear:
 - a long-sleeved shirt or jacket and long pants (tucked into your socks for extra protection)
 - light-coloured clothing
- Clean up:
 - once a week, get rid of standing water around your home in places such as bird baths, eavestroughs, wheelbarrows and flower pots etc. (mosquitoes lay their eggs in stagnant water, even small amounts)
 - keep bushes and shrubs clear of overgrowth and debris (adult mosquitoes like to rest in dense shrubbery)
 - turn your compost pile often
- Use insect repellent containing DEET. (DEET is a powerful chemical. Read the label carefully and apply as directed. You can also ask your pharmacist for help when choosing a DEET product.)

For additional information on protection measures against West Nile virus such as reducing mosquito breeding sites and the safe use of insect repellents, please visit www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca.

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For further information, please contact:

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