



COUNTY OF ORANGE – HEALTH CARE AGENCY

PRESS RELEASE

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Orange County Reports First Human West Nile Virus Case of 2013

(Santa Ana) - A Cypress female in her sixties has tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV) infection, becoming the County's first human WNV infection in 2013. This is the 15th human case of WNV reported in California. The woman was admitted to the hospital in July with symptoms of West Nile Virus, and is now at home recovering.

In 2012, there were 48 reported human infections of West Nile Virus and two WNV related deaths reported in Orange County.

"West Nile Virus is endemic in Orange County, recurring every year during the summer months and continuing into the fall," said Dr. Eric G. Handler, County Health Officer. "The best way to avoid West Nile Virus infection is to take precautionary measures to avoid mosquito bites."

Recommended WNV precautions include:

- Emptying all standing water on your property to reduce areas in which mosquitoes may breed, including flower pots and pet bowls
- Making sure your window and door screens are in good condition
- Using insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or products containing IR3535, always following label directions
- Limiting outdoor activity at dawn and dusk, when mosquitoes are most active
- Wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors.

Most people who become infected with West Nile Virus do not experience symptoms, but about 20% will develop fever and may have headache, body aches, nausea, tiredness and sometimes a skin rash. More serious symptoms, such as severe headaches, neck stiffness, confusion, muscle weakness or paralysis, occur more rarely, but people who develop these symptoms should seek medical care immediately. People over 50 years of age and those with certain medical conditions are at increased risk of serious complications from WNV infection.

Information on mosquito control is available on the Orange County Vector Control District's website at www.ocvcd.org. Other websites with helpful information about West Nile Virus include:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov
- State of California www.westnile.ca.gov
- Orange County Health Care Agency www.ochealthinfo.com

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