



## DOUGLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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### **First Human Case of West Nile Virus Reported in Douglas County**

*Omaha, Nebraska* – The Douglas County Health Department today announced the first human case of West Nile virus in a Douglas County resident for 2006. The individual is between 40 to 50 years of age and the symptoms are indicative of West Nile Fever, the milder form of West Nile virus disease. The individual was not hospitalized and is recovering.

"I am not surprised that we have received reports of a human case since we have had 14 birds that tested positive for West Nile virus since June 5th in Douglas County," says Adi Pour, Ph.D, health director for Douglas County.

West Nile virus is transmitted through the bite of a mosquito that has picked up the virus by feeding on an infected bird.

Last year, there were 13 human cases of the virus reported in Douglas County and no deaths.

Most people who are infected by a mosquito have no symptoms or only mild flu-like symptoms. Less than one out of 150 people who get bitten by an infected mosquito and become infected will get seriously ill. However, people over 50 and those with weakened immune systems are especially vulnerable to the disease and are more likely to experience serious consequences.

West Nile fever includes flu-like symptoms such as fever and muscle weakness. Symptoms of the more serious West Nile encephalitis include inflammation of the brain, disorientation, convulsions and paralysis.

To avoid mosquito bites:

- Apply mosquito repellent containing DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus;
- Wear long-sleeved shirt, pants and socks;
- Avoid going out at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active; and
- Eliminate standing water to reduce mosquito breeding sites.

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