

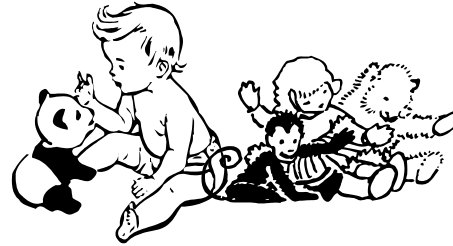
Q: Is my child at risk for becoming infected with West Nile Virus while attending daycare?

A: Not generally. The mosquitoes that most commonly carry West Nile Virus are generally more active during evening, nighttime and dawn hours, so children who attend daycare during the daytime are at minimal risk for exposure. However, mosquitoes may be active during the day in areas where there are weeds, tall grass or bushes. So if a child will be in or near such areas, it is recommended that she or he wear protective clothing (as described below) and that you consider the use of a mosquito repellent with DEET (according to the manufacturer's directions) on your child.



Q: Can children go on outdoor field trips and play outdoors during the summer?

A: Since mosquitoes are not generally active during daytime, children who go on trips during the daytime are at minimal risk for exposure. However, if the field trip is to an area where there are weeds, tall grass, bushes or known high mosquito activity, or if the trip is at dusk, during the evening, night time or at dawn, children should be advised to wear long pants, loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts and socks to minimize the possibility of exposure to mosquitoes. In addition, if children will be in an area where there is known to be high mosquito activity at other times of day, children should also take these precautions, and the use of a mosquito repellent



with DEET (according to the manufacturer's directions) should be considered.

Q: Are children or infants at greater risk for becoming infected with West Nile Virus?

A: Children, including young children, are not at greater risk than other individuals for becoming infected with West Nile Virus. Anyone can become infected with the virus if bitten by an infected mosquito, but children will need an adult's help in taking precautions against mosquito bites. The same precautions apply to children in daycare settings as in home settings.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that repellents used on children should not contain more than 10% DEET. Concentrations of up to 30% DEET has been shown to be acceptable for adults. *Where appropriate, consider using non-chemical ways to deter biting insects such as protective clothing, window and door screens, and wearable netting when camping.*



- **Use DEET according to manufacturer's directions on the label.**
- *Do not use repellents containing Deet on infants under two months of age.*
- *Store DEET out of reach of children.*
- *Use caution when using repellents containing DEET on children.*
- *Do not apply DEET directly on to children. Apply to your own hands and then put it on the child.*
- *Do not apply on hands or near eyes and mouth of young children.*
- *Do not allow children to apply repellents themselves.*
- *As with chemical exposure in general, pregnant women should take care to avoid exposures to repellents when practical.*
- *Wash all treated skin and clothing with soap and water after returning indoors.*
- *Never use repellents over cuts, wounds, or irritated skin.*
- *Depending on the concentration of DEET in a product, it can be effective for approximately 3-6 hours. Avoid prolonged or excessive use of DEET. Use sparingly to cover exposed skin and clothing. Do not apply to skin covered by clothing.*

Note: that Vitamin B, ultrasonic devices, and incense have not been shown to be effective in preventing mosquito bites.

Q: If a child is bitten by a mosquito at daycare should he or she be tested for West Nile Virus?

A: No. Illnesses related to mosquito bites are still uncommon. However, a child should see a doctor immediately if he or she develops symptoms such as high fever, confusion, muscle weakness, severe headaches, stiff neck, or if the child's eyes become sensitive to light. Patients with mild symptoms should recover completely, and do not require any specific medication or laboratory testing.

Q: If a child is bitten by an infected mosquito, will he or she get sick?

A: Most people, including children, who are bitten by mosquitoes carrying the West Nile Virus, will experience no symptoms or only very mild illnesses.

Q: Should medical attention be sought if a daycare provider thinks a child has become infected with West Nile Virus?

A: Even though the chances are slight that a child could become infected with West Nile Virus, parents or caregivers should contact a doctor immediately if a child develops symptoms such as high fever, confusion, muscle weakness, severe headaches, stiff neck, or if the child's eyes become sensitive to light.

For more information on West Nile Virus, contact the Springfield-Greene County Health Department at 864-1658 or visit our website at www.springfield.mo.us or www.westnilefilespringfield.org

Source: New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

WEST NILE VIRUS

Facts for the Childcare Provider

Message brought to you by



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