



News Release

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For Immediate Release

Public health officials announce a new human case of West Nile virus in Massachusetts

Risk continues until the first hard frost

BOSTON (September 24, 2018) - The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) today announced the twenty-fifth case of WNV in Massachusetts this year. The case is a male in his 70s from Hampshire County who is hospitalized due to his illness

“On August 21 we announced that all communities in Massachusetts were at moderate risk for human infections of WNV,” said Public Health Commissioner Monica Bharel, MD, MPH. “Since then, most of our cases have been from urban areas that usually see most of our WNV activity; however, this individual is from Hampshire County, where cases of WNV are more unusual.”

“The risk from mosquito-borne disease does start to decline at this time of year,” said DPH State Epidemiologist Dr. Catherine Brown. “However, that doesn’t mean the risk has gone away. In fact, it will persist in all areas until the first hard frost.”

In 2017, there were six human cases of WNV infection identified in Massachusetts.

WNV is usually transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. While WNV can infect people of all ages, people over the age of 50 are at higher risk for severe disease. Most people infected with WNV will have no symptoms. When present, WNV [symptoms](#) tend to include fever and flu-like illness. In rare cases, more severe illness can occur.

People have an important role to play in protecting themselves and their loved ones from illnesses caused by mosquitoes. To learn more, or to see all WNV and EEE positive results, visit the Arbovirus Surveillance Information web page at www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito or call the DPH Epidemiology Program at 617-983-6800.