

# OAKLAND COUNTY HEALTH DIVISION



## Mosquito Smarts

### West Nile Virus Questions and Answers for Dogs and

**Q. Can West Nile Virus cause illness in dogs or cats?**

**A.** West Nile Virus infection has been found in dogs and cats. However, the rate of infection appears very low.

**Q. Can infected dogs or cats be carriers for West Nile Virus and give the virus to humans?**

**A.** West Nile Virus is transmitted by infected mosquitoes. There are no known cases of the virus being spread from person to person, animal to animal or from animal to person.

**Q. How do dogs or cats become infected with West Nile Virus?**

**A.** The same way that humans become infected, by the bite of an infected mosquito. The virus is transmitted to the person or animal while the mosquito feeds on blood. The virus then multiplies and may cause illness. Mosquitoes typically become infected when they bite infected birds.

**Q. Should a dog or cat infected with West Nile Virus be destroyed?**

**A.** No, there is no reason to destroy an animal just because it has been infected with West Nile Virus. Full recovery from the infection is likely.

**Q. What is the treatment for an animal infected with West Nile Virus?**

**A.** Treatment would be to help with symptoms, in the same manner a veterinarian would treat any other viral infection.

**Q. How can I protect my dog or cat from being bitten by mosquitoes?**

**A.** Do the same things you do to protect yourself; eliminate mosquito habitat and avoid exposure. Talk to your veterinarian about safe mosquito repellents for pets. (DEET containing products **are not** approved for pets.)



**For more information on West Nile Virus contact**

**1-877-377-3641**

**or visit our website at [www.oakgov.com/health](http://www.oakgov.com/health)**

**L. Brooks Patterson, Oakland County Executive**



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