

## ***Fight The Bite***

The Mississippi Department of Health urges all Mississippians to avoid mosquito bites whenever possible. The risk of a healthy person getting West Nile virus from a mosquito bite is very low, but protection remains important for all Mississippians.

West Nile virus is transmitted *primarily* through the bite of an infected mosquito.

### Protect Yourself

Avoid mosquitoes whenever possible. Stay indoors or take personal protective measures, especially between dusk and dawn, which are peak mosquito biting times.

- Use mosquito repellent with DEET. Products with up to 30% DEET will provide adequate protection under most conditions. Use DEET concentrations of 10% or less on children ages two years to 12 years of age, parents should consult their pediatrician. *Always follow the manufacturer's directions for use as printed on the product label.*
- Wear long-sleeved, long-legged clothing with socks and shoes when practical.

### Protect Your Home-Prevent Mosquito Breeding Around Your Home

- Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots or similar water-holding containers.
- Remove all discarded tires on the property. Used tires have become the most common mosquito breeding site in the country.
- Remove all leaf debris.
- Close garbage can lids. Be sure water does not collect in the bottom of garbage cans.
- Drill holes in the bottoms of recycling containers that are kept outdoors.
- Make sure roof gutters drain properly, and clean clogged gutters in the spring and fall.
- Turn over plastic wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use.
- Change the water in bird baths frequently (every 2-3 days).
- Clean vegetation and debris from the edge of ponds.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, outdoor saunas and hot tubs.
- Drain water from pool covers.
- Use landscaping to eliminate standing water that collects on your property.
- Repair damaged or torn window and door screens.
- Remove outdoor pet food and water dishes that are not being used.
- Flush livestock water troughs twice a week.
- Check around construction sites or do-it-yourself improvements to ensure that proper backfilling and grading prevent drainage problems.

### And Protect Your Community

- Call your local health department to report dead birds (Madison County Health Department 601-859-3316).
- If you know of specific mosquito control problems, call your local city or county public works director, the City Hall or the Board of Supervisors.
- Learn what your local government is doing to control mosquitoes. Ask how you can help.
- Remind or help neighbors to eliminate mosquito breeding sites on their property.