



# St. Joseph County Department of Health

*"Promoting physical and mental health and facilitating the prevention of disease, injury and disability for all St. Joseph County residents"*

**ST. JOSEPH COUNTY**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY** **INCREASED HUMAN RISK OF WEST NILE VIRUS**

The St. Joseph County Department of Health is urging residents to be mindful of the threat of West Nile Virus in our area. Despite cooling temperatures, mosquitoes are still being regularly trapped and are increasingly testing positive for West Nile Virus. There have been 24 positive pools of mosquitoes identified so far in 2022 and more are expected. Neighboring Elkhart County has recorded 20 cases of West Nile Virus in mosquitoes to date as well. Additionally, Eastern Equine Encephalitis has been detected in lower Michigan. There have been 2 documented human cases of West Nile in other counties in Indiana this year. No human cases have been detected in St. Joseph County; however, in 2021, a St. Joseph County resident contracted West Nile Virus in the month of October. The threat of West Nile Virus will persist until a hard freeze.

Signs and symptoms of West Nile Virus disease usually appear within 2–14 days of a bite from an infected mosquito. These symptoms might include headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. Most people with this type of West Nile Virus disease recover completely, but some can have persistent fatigue and weakness. For some, West Nile Virus can be severe. If you think that you have West Nile Virus disease, contact your health care provider.

The St. Joseph County Department of Health encourages you to take the following steps to protect you and your family from mosquitoes:

- Avoid being outdoors during prime mosquito biting times - dusk to dawn - when possible.
- Apply an EPA-registered insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-methane-diol to clothes and exposed skin.
- Cover exposed skin by wearing a hat, long sleeves and long pants in places where mosquitoes are especially active, such as wooded areas.
- Treat clothing and outdoor gear with 0.5% permethrin if camping or spending extended periods of time outdoors.
- Make sure all windows and doors have screens, and that all screens are in good repair.
- Reduce mosquito breeding on and around your property.

For more information about West Nile Virus, go to the St. Joseph County Department of Health's website (<https://www.in.gov/localhealth/stjosephcounty/environmental-health/pests-and-vectors/mosquitoes/>).

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