

# For Health Professionals

## Health Alerts

### Health Update #141 - West Nile Virus Update - September 15, 2005

The NYS laboratory at Wadsworth has reported an increased number of West Nile Virus positive pools of *Culex pipiens/restuans* mosquitos that were recently trapped in Erie County.

The majority of these pools of mosquitos were captured in South/West and South/Central areas of Amherst.

Based on previous experience, if human WNV illness appears, it is one to two weeks after the increase in positive mosquito pools.

The Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) is asking physicians and other healthcare providers to include WNV testing for patients with viral meningitis or encephalitis during the remainder of the adult mosquito season ending October 31st. Providers should immediately contact the Erie County Health Department at 716-858-7697 (Monday - Friday 8:30AM - 4:00PM) or 716-898-4225 (evenings, weekends, and holidays) to report suspect cases of WNV and to obtain the required paperwork for collection and submission of clinical samples.

The diagnostic facilities of the NYSDOH Wadsworth Center will perform the WNV testing for all persons in the state for whom such services are not otherwise available. Due to limited laboratory testing capacity, WNV testing will be performed for patients who meet the following criteria:

#### Suspect Case of Viral Encephalitis

##### A. Cerebral Spinal Fluid (CSF) Specimen

An adult or pediatric patient with suspected viral encephalitis, characterized by:

- Fever = 38° C or 100° F, AND
- Altered mental status AND
- An abnormal cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) AND
- Hospitalized AND
- At least 1.0ml of CSF obtained

will be tested by ELISA for WNV IgM antibodies and by PCR testing for the viral encephalitis panel. If the above criteria are not met, the CSF will ONLY be tested by ELISA for WNV IgM antibodies. If the patient meets the criteria but there isn't enough CSF, providers can choose to test for either WNV antibodies or for the encephalitis panel.

##### B. Serum Specimen

Serum will be tested for WNV IgM antibodies by ELISA, WNV polyvalent antibodies by MIA and Arboviral IgG by IFA. Please indicate if it is an acute or convalescent specimen.

#### Suspect Case of Viral Meningitis

##### A. Cerebral Spinal Fluid (CSF) Specimen

An adult or pediatric patient (aged 2 years or older) with suspected viral meningitis will be tested by ELISA for WNV IgM antibodies ONLY.

##### B. Serum Specimen

Serum will be tested for WNV IgM antibodies by Elisa, WNV polyvalent antibodies by MIA and Arboviral IgG antibodies by IFA. Please indicate if it is an acute or convalescent specimen.

For more information: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm>