

# West Nile Virus

## **What is it and how is it caused?**

West Nile is an infectious disease carried by mosquitoes who have fed on an infected bird.

## **What does it look like?**

West Nile looks like a typical mosquito bite.

## **Signs and Symptoms**

Signs and symptoms usually appear 2-15 days after a bite. Symptoms can vary between individuals, with some individuals showing no symptoms at all. Other symptoms include: fever, headache, rash, and body aches. Less than 1% can develop more serious symptoms: stiff neck, nausea, vomiting, difficulty swallowing, drowsiness, confusion, loss of consciousness, muscle weakness, reduced muscle coordination (trouble walking), blurred vision or worsening eyesight, numbness (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2014).

## **Treatment**

Typically, no treatment is necessary and recovery usually occurs without complications. If symptoms become unbearable, over-the-counter pain relievers can be taken to reduce symptoms.

## **Risks**

Mosquitoes are typically prevalent between mid-April and late-September/October. They are most active in the early morning or before dark.

## **Prevention**

When outdoors, use insect repellent that contains DEET or Icaridin. Wear light-coloured protective clothing and ensure doors and window screens fit tightly and have no holes. Mosquitoes breed in standing water so be sure to empty standing water (e.g. garbage cans, wading pools, bird baths and pet water dishes) after use or after rainfall (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2014).

## **What does Camp Kawartha do?**

Camp Kawartha does its best to remove standing water after rainfalls. We also encourage campers to use insect repellent and cover up as much as possible. Counsellors are also trained in first-aid and treatment of bug bites.

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## **References**

Public Health Agency of Canada (2014, July 28). [West Nile virus](#).