



Weekly Alert September 5th, 2024

## West Nile Virus: awareness high in Texas

### *Local cases highlight importance of prevention*

According to the [CDC](#), 377 human cases of West Nile virus (WNV) have been detected in 38 states in 2024, [including Texas](#). Last week, nearly half of Texas adults surveyed (47%) heard about WNV cases occurring earlier this year. Most heard it from TV or radio.

#### How common is West Nile Virus?

WNV is spread to humans when they are bitten by an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds. WNV is the most common mosquito-borne disease in the U.S. It is mostly spread during the summer and fall. In this week's survey of 583 adults from 5 states, 36% had heard that West Nile cases were earlier this year. Awareness is trending up from 27% the prior week. Adults over 50 heard this claim more than those under 50 (54% vs 30%).

#### How severe is West Nile Virus infection?

Most people infected with WNV have no symptoms, and those with mild symptoms usually fully recover [within a few days to several weeks](#). However, older adults and people with weakened immune systems are at higher risk of severe illness. Symptoms can be as mild as fever, headache, swollen lymph glands, or as severe as neck stiffness, convulsions, or paralysis. So far in 2024, [about two-thirds of cases](#) have been serious with neurological effects like brain swelling, and in rare instances, respiratory paralysis.

Last year, 2023, the virus was linked to 182 deaths in the U.S.

#### Keeping Texans safe during peak West Nile season

There are no vaccines or medicines that prevent West Nile virus. The best protection is reducing contact with mosquitoes. Remove standing water near your home where mosquitoes like to breed. Wear clothing that covers your skin and use bug spray with DEET to prevent mosquito bites. Please share the resources below to keep Texans informed and protected from West Nile infection.

This week's report is based on responses from a panel of 583 adult residents of Texas (n = 90), St. Louis, MO (n = 145), Omaha, NE (n = 87), Baltimore, MD (n = 119) and Colorado (n = 142) surveyed August 31 – September 2, 2024. Explore these data and more at [iHeard Texas](#).

# Shareable Resources

Click to download resources to share in your community.  
Remember to include #iHeardTexas #iHeardTX when sharing on social media!

## Here's what you need to know...

**West Nile virus**  
iHeard Texas

377 cases of illness caused by West Nile virus have been reported in the U.S. so far in 2024.  
**Here's what you need to know.**

Swipe to learn more

Source: CDC

iHeard Texas

West Nile virus is the most common mosquito-borne disease in the U.S. It spreads to people when they are bitten by an infected mosquito.

Most people have no symptoms, and those with mild symptoms usually fully recover in a few days to several weeks. But symptoms can be severe.

**Those at higher risk of severe illness are:**

- Older adults
- People with weakened immune systems

Source: MedlinePlus

**West Nile symptoms include:** iHeard Texas

Mild	Fever	Headache	Swollen lymph glands
Severe	Neck stiffness	Convulsions	Paralysis
Serious nervous system infection	Brain swelling	Respiratory paralysis	

Source: CDC

**To avoid mosquito bites:** iHeard Texas

- Remove standing water where mosquitoes can breed
- Use EPA-registered insect repellent
- Wear protective clothing like long sleeves, pants and socks
- Cover gaps in your clothing where mosquitoes can get to your skin
- Replace outdoor lights with yellow "bug" lights

Source: EPA

**When is mosquito season?** iHeard Texas

Mosquitoes are around as early as February and as late as November. Warm and humid areas can have mosquitoes year-round. Texas is in the southern regions.

- Southernmost areas: February–November
- South & Southwest: March–September
- Mid-Atlantic, Midwest & West: Early April–September
- New England, Northern Midwest & West: Late April–September
- Northernmost areas: May–September

Graphic adapted from: Best Bee Brothers

Suggested Caption:

Have you been hearing about West Nile virus lately? Here's what to know about West Nile virus, the most common mosquito-borne disease in the U.S.

#IHeardTexas #MosquitoSeason #Mosquito #WestNileVirus #WNV

[Download here](#)

## West Nile Virus Fact Sheet

**West Nile virus**  
IHeard Texas

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Sources: CDC, EPA, MedlinePlus

[Download here](#)

## Mosquito Season Fact Sheet

**Step up your defense.**  
*It's mosquito season!*

**Mosquitoes:**

- Lay eggs in standing water
- Can spread diseases like Zika, West Nile, Dengue, and Malaria

Mosquitoes are around as early as February and as late as November. Warm and humid areas can have mosquitoes year-round. Texas is in the southern region.

**Map of the United States showing mosquito season regions:**

- Southernmost areas: February - November
- South & Southwest: March - September
- Mid-Atlantic, Midwest & West: Late April - October
- New England, Northern Midwest & West: Late May - September
- Northernmost areas: May - September

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- Remove standing water where mosquitoes can breed

Mosquito and tick season  
IHeard Texas

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## Combined Resource

Click to download a printer-friendly PDF with all the information above!

[Download here](#)

Find more information on what public health topics are trending this week.

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