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## Public Health Advisory - West Nile Virus August 27, 2012

### **SITUATION UPDATE**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicated that 1,118 cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) disease, including 41 deaths have been reported for the United States, as of August 21, 2012. According to CDC, this is the highest number of human cases reported to them since WNV was first detected in the US in 1999.

As of August 23, 2012, 41 human cases of WNV have been reported in California. One confirmed case has been reported to-date for Riverside County. The California Department of Public Health reported that there have been two WNV related fatalities in 2012. In addition to the 41 reported human cases for California, six horses, 805 dead birds, 1380 mosquito samples, 131 sentinel chickens, and two squirrels have tested positive for WNV.

### **ACTIONS REQUESTED OF ALL CLINICIANS**

The diagnosis of WNV infection is based on a high index of clinical suspicion and specific laboratory tests. We highly recommend that clinicians test for WNV whenever there is a history of unexplained encephalitis, meningitis or unexplained febrile illness lasting 7 days or more; especially if the fever is accompanied by a headache, rash, swollen lymph nodes, eye pain and nausea or vomiting.

#### **What specimens are needed?**

- Acute serum specimen ( $\geq 2$ cc) and,
- If a lumbar puncture is performed, 1-2 cc of cerebrospinal fluid is required for testing.

**Why test?** Testing differentiates WNV from other conditions (enterovirus, other arboviral diseases). Testing results offer anticipatory guidance--both WNV neuroinvasive disease and WNV fever patients can have lingering symptoms and knowing the underlying etiology is helpful for the patient and family members.

#### **Prevention**

It is important to educate patients about preventive measures.

- **DRAIN:** Mosquitoes lay their eggs on standing water. Young mosquitoes grow in the water. Get rid of standing water around the home. Empty water out of buckets, old tires, flower pots, and toys.
- **DEFEND:** Use an EPA-registered insect repellent with DEET, picaridin, IR3535 or oil of lemon eucalyptus in it. Put the repellent on your skin that is not covered by clothes. Follow the directions carefully.
- **DUSK and DAWN:** Mosquitoes that transmit West Nile virus bite in the early morning and early evening hours, and sometimes throughout the night. When outside in the early morning or evening hours, wear long pants and a long sleeved shirt.

West Nile Virus cases are reportable to Department of Public Health. Please fax reports to (951) 358-5102. For questions regarding reporting or testing of suspect cases, please contact Disease Control at (951) 358-5107.