

For Health Professionals

Health Alerts

Health Advisory #93 - West Nile Virus Update - August 4, 2004

As of July 30, 2004 a total of 30 dead birds, 25 mosquito pools, and 1 human have tested positive for West Nile Virus in New York State. Of these, 2 birds, 24 mosquito pools, and the human case have been identified from NYC. The breakdown for positive birds for WNY is as follows: Cattaraugus - 2, Chautauqua - 2, Erie - 1, Niagara - 1 (Allegany, Genesee, Orleans, Wyoming - 0).

On August 2, 2004 the NYS laboratory at Wadsworth reported a positive mosquito pool of *Culex pipiens/restuans* trapped on July 22, 2004 from Erie County. **This report represents the first positive mosquito pool for West Nile Virus in Erie County.**

Based on state-wide surveillance from previous years, an increase in dead birds, and an increase in positive mosquito pools increases the risk of a positive human case.

Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) is asking physicians and other healthcare providers to routinely include WNV testing for patients with viral meningitis or encephalitis during the adult mosquito season (i.e., May through October). 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 $\geq 38^{\circ}$ 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>