

HALTON REGION HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
TEL: 905-825-6000 FAX: 905-825-1444

TO: Halton Physicians

Medical Chiefs of Staff: Joseph Brant Hospital, Halton Healthcare (Oakville, Milton and Georgetown Hospitals)  
Chairs of: Family Practice, Paediatrics, Internal Medicine, Emergency, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Surgery  
Chief of Laboratory Services and Infection Control Practitioners

POST IN: Emergency Department and Physicians Lounge

FROM: Dr. Joanna Oda, Associate Medical Officer of Health

DATE: August 22, 2019

**RE: West Nile Virus positive mosquitoes found in Halton Region**

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Halton Region Health Department's active surveillance for West Nile virus (WNV) has identified 3 positive mosquito pools in Oakville and Milton this past week. These are the first batches of WNV positive mosquitoes for Halton in 2019. Human WNV cases often follow 0 to 6 weeks after the first positive mosquito pool. To date, Halton Region Health Department has had no confirmed human cases of West Nile Virus in 2019.

### **Diagnosis**

West Nile Virus (WNV) is transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. These mosquitoes most commonly breed in urban areas that hold water, such as bird baths, plant pots, old toys, and tires.

The incubation period for WNV ranges from 2 to 14 days. While most WNV infections are asymptomatic, approximately 20% to 25% of infected individuals develop non-neurological symptoms (West Nile fever), which presents as a mild flu-like illness with fever, headache, and myalgia, occasionally with a skin rash and swollen lymph nodes. Less than 1% of infections develop neuro-invasive disease.

### **Testing**

For diagnostic testing, acute and convalescent serology of clotted blood or serum is recommended. For neuro-invasive illness also submit a cerebrospinal fluid sample for serological testing (WNV IgM). The requisition should indicate "West Nile Virus - Serology" as well as onset date and any travel history.

### **Additional Resources on WNV**

Public Health Ontario, West Nile Virus : <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/vector-borne-zoonotic-diseases/west-nile-virus>

Additional laboratory information: [WNV Lababstract](#):

[https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/LAB\\_SD\\_011\\_West\\_Nile\\_virus\\_interpreting\\_serology\\_results.pdf](https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/LAB_SD_011_West_Nile_virus_interpreting_serology_results.pdf)

Current Halton WNV surveillance:

<https://www.halton.ca/For-Residents/Immunizations-Preventable-Disease/Diseases-Infections/West-Nile-Virus>

Please report all suspected or confirmed cases of [Diseases of Public Health Significance](#) (formerly Reportable Diseases) to the Halton Region Health Department as soon as possible. Diseases marked \* should be reported immediately by telephone (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) or fax (Mon-Fri, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm only). Other diseases can be reported the next working day. Dial 311, 905-825-6000 or toll free at 1-866-442-5866. For general information, please visit [halton.ca](http://halton.ca).

**If any link provided in this memo does not work, please cut and paste it into your web browser.**