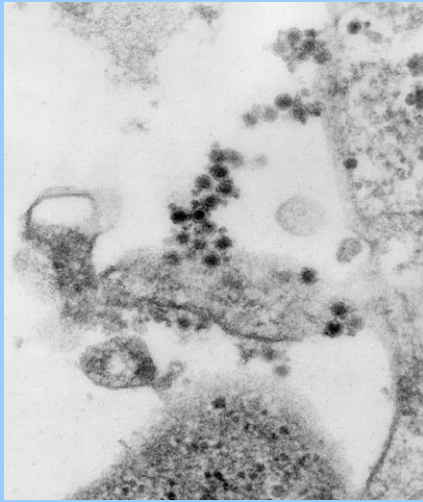


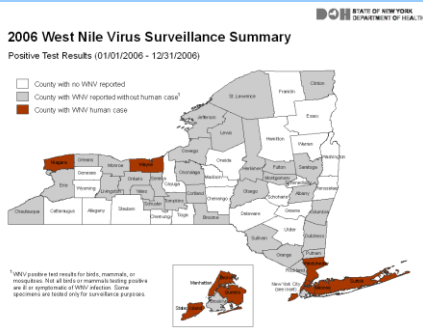
WEST NILE VIRUS

(Family: *Flaviviridae*)

Oneida Lake Status:
Present



West Nile virus seen through an electron microscope



New York cases in 2006
(www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/westnile/update/update.htm)



Mosquitoes carry this virus between birds and humans

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- Mosquitoes can pass infection to humans
- When humans are infected, symptoms are rare
- People over 50 are at greatest infection risk

West Nile virus (WNV) is generally found in birds, but may infect humans that are bitten by an infected mosquito. First confirmed in New York State in 1999, over 193 human cases have been reported statewide since 2000.

The New York State Department of Health estimates that just 20% of individuals infected with WNV develop symptoms. In mild cases, called West Nile fever, people may experience headaches, body aches, fevers, skin rashes and/or swollen lymph glands. In severe cases, when West Nile encephalitis or meningitis (inflammations of the spinal cord and brain) develops, additional symptoms include weakness, stupor, disorientation, tremors, convulsions, paralysis, coma, and death. An estimated one in 150 people infected with West Nile virus develops the severe form of the disease, and people over 50 years of age are at the greatest risk.

In 2001, spraying was conducted in Oneida and Onondaga counties after sample mosquitoes tested positive for WNV. In 2003, 10 dead birds were found to be infected with WNV in Oneida County and 36 were found in Onondaga County.

Mosquito-bite prevention is the best way to reduce the risk of diseases such as WNV. To stay protected, wear long sleeves, pants and socks when possible, or use an insect repellent on exposed skin. Because mosquitoes breed in standing water, draining water trapped in outdoor areas will keep the overall mosquito population down.



Mosquitoes love to breed in the water trapped in old tires
(www.ago.mo.gov/photogallery/2005/)