



News Release

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For Immediate Release

West Nile virus still active in Massachusetts

Nine more human cases identified

BOSTON (October 5, 2018) - The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) today announced nine new cases of West Nile virus in Massachusetts this year. The cases include:

- a female in her 80s from Essex County who is hospitalized;
- a male in his 70s from Barnstable County who was hospitalized;
- a female in her 60s from Middlesex County who was hospitalized;
- a male in his 60s from Essex County who was not hospitalized;
- a female in her 30s from Middlesex County who was hospitalized;
- a female in her 40s from Essex County who was hospitalized;
- a male in his 50s from Middlesex County who was hospitalized;
- a male in his 50s from Suffolk County who is hospitalized; and
- a male in his 70s from Franklin County who was hospitalized.

This brings the total number of reported West Nile virus human cases to 38 this year - the highest number of cases Massachusetts has ever recorded in a single year. The previous record was 33 cases in 2012.

“The forecast includes some warm fall temperatures,” said Public Health Commissioner Monica Bharel, MD, MPH. “Mosquitoes might still be active and it remains important for people to use mosquito repellent and wear long sleeves to reduce exposed skin.”

In 2017, there were six human cases of WNV infection identified in Massachusetts.

WNV is usually transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. While WNV can infect people of all ages, people over the age of 50 are at higher risk for severe disease. Most people infected with WNV will have no symptoms. When present, WNV [symptoms](#) tend to include fever and flu-like illness. In rare cases, more severe illness can occur.

People have an important role to play in protecting themselves and their loved ones from illnesses caused by mosquitoes. To learn more, or to see all WNV and EEE positive results, visit the Arbovirus Surveillance Information web page at www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito or call the DPH Epidemiology Program at 617-983-6800.