



# MOSQUITO SAFETY INFORMATION

www.wvcampsafety.com



Diseases can be transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito. The most commonly reported mosquito-transmitted disease in West Virginia is La Crosse encephalitis (LAC), particularly in the south-central part of the state.

Cases of West Nile encephalitis (WN) have occurred throughout the state. Symptoms of encephalitis include fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, stiff neck, and fatigue. Disease progression could result in further neurological problems, such as tremors, seizures, movement disorders, and coma. Since there is no specific treatment for encephalitis, the only way to prevent mosquito-transmitted encephalitis is through reducing contact with infected mosquitoes.

Camp directors should ensure that mosquito populations are low in areas of the camp where children live and play. Parents can help by educating children about mosquito bite prevention when they go into the woods. Hardwood forests (oak, maple) serve as suitable 'mosquito habitat.' LAC mosquito larvae develop in the tree holes and the forest undergrowth provides protection for the adult mosquitoes.

## **Avoid mosquito bites when going into 'mosquito habitat'**

- Send children to camp with a bottle of mosquito repellent containing DEET, picaridin, IR<sub>3535</sub>, or oil of eucalyptus.
- Carefully read the directions on the mosquito repellent and explain proper use to your child before camp. Mosquito repellent should be used sparingly before going into areas where mosquitoes are active.
- Teach your children to wash with soap and warm water when they return from mosquito habitat. Since mosquitoes are attracted to cues produced by living, mammalian hosts (such as lactic acid, octenol, and carbon dioxide), regular bathing is encouraged.
- Pack some long sleeved shirts, long pants, and socks in your child's trunk. Your child may need that type of clothing if they are going into mosquito habitat.
- Special considerations for young children: Never apply repellents to the face of young children. Oil of eucalyptus should not be used on children less than three years old.

## **For additional information about mosquitoes and mosquito-transmitted disease**

[www.cdc.gov/family/camping](http://www.cdc.gov/family/camping)

[www.nps.gov/public\\_health/di/vb\\_ia.htm](http://www.nps.gov/public_health/di/vb_ia.htm)



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**For more information about recent mosquito activity and incidence of mosquito-transmitted disease in West Virginia and the rest of the country**

[www.dhhr.gov/oeps/disease/Zoonosis/Mosquito/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.dhhr.gov/oeps/disease/Zoonosis/Mosquito/Pages/default.aspx)

[www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html)

**For a fun instructional resource for kids from the CDC**

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/arbor/neato.htm>