

## Medical Alert

# WEST NILE VIRUS

Last summer, Orange County reported 17 West Nile Virus (WNV) positive dead birds and a positive mosquito pool. Although no human cases of the WNV were been reported in California, the WNV activity in Orange County suggested that human cases could soon follow. Human cases had already been reported in Arizona, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Concerns have already been raised about the possibility of WNV activity in the coming months.

The incubation period for WNV infection ranges from 2 to 14 days after a bite from an infected mosquito. Most infections in humans are asymptomatic. Symptoms can include fever, headache, stiff neck, rash, muscle ache/weakness, and swollen lymph nodes.

To reduce your risk of getting a mosquito bite, make sure that door and window screens are installed and in good condition, eliminate standing water such as drain pots, clogged gutters. Keep swimming pools clean and chlorinated or drained and covered. When outdoors, use an insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535. And finally, avoid being outdoors and during dusk and dawn which are prime mosquito biting times and wear long sleeve and long pants while outdoors.

For more information please refer to Centers for Disease Control and Preventions: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm> and California Department of Public Health: [www.westnile.ca.gov](http://www.westnile.ca.gov).