West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis: What are the health risks to me?

**West Nile Virus (WNV) Symptoms**

- 70-80% of people who become infected will show no symptoms.
- About 1 in 5 people who are infected will develop a fever with other symptoms such as:
  - Headache
  - Body Aches
  - Joint pain
  - Vomiting
  - Diarrhea
  - Rash (usually on chest, stomach, and back)
  - Swollen lymph glands
- Most people with this type of WNV disease recover completely, but fatigue and weakness can last for weeks or months.
- **Severe symptoms** can occur. Less than 1% of people who are infected will develop a serious neurologic illness such as encephalitis or meningitis (inflammation of the brain or surrounding tissues). Symptoms of neurologic illness can include:
  - Headache
  - High fever
  - Neck stiffness
  - Disorientation
  - Coma
  - Tremors
  - Seizures
  - Paralysis
  - Convulsions
  - Vision loss
- Serious illness can occur in people of any age. However, people over 60 years old are at the greatest risk for severe disease. People with certain medical conditions, such as cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, kidney disease, and people who have received organ transplants, are also at greater risk for serious illness.
- Recovery from severe disease may take several weeks or months. Some neurologic side effects could be permanent.
- About 10% of people who develop neurologic infection from WNV will die.
Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) Symptoms

- EEE can result in one of two types of illnesses. Systemic, which infects the entire body, and encephalitic, which involves swelling of the brain. The type of illness depends on the age of the person and other health factors of each individual.
- Systemic infection has an abrupt onset (4-10 days after the bite) and is characterized by:
  - Chills
  - Fever
  - Weakness
  - Joint pain
  - Muscle aches/pain
- Systemic infection lasts 1-2 weeks.
- Encephalitic infection in infants has an abrupt onset. In older children and adults, symptoms appear after a few days of systemic illness. Symptoms of encephalitic infection are:
  - Fever
  - Headache
  - Irritability
  - Restlessness
  - Drowsiness
  - Lack of appetite
  - Vomiting
  - Diarrhea
  - Convulsions
  - Coma
  - Cyanosis (Bluish discoloration of skin or lips due to lack of oxygen in the bloodstream)
- Approximately 1 in 3 people with EEE will die from the disease. Death usually occurs 2-10 days after onset of symptoms, but can occur much later.
- Of those who recover, many are left with disabling and progressive mental and physical symptoms. These symptoms can range from minimal brain dysfunction, to severe intellectual impairment, personality disorders, seizures, paralysis, and cranial nerve dysfunction. Many patients with severe long term symptoms die within a few years.