West Nile Virus: Protecting Your Horses

**Transmission**

West Nile virus (WNV) is spread to horses and other mammals through the bite of an infected mosquito. A mosquito first becomes infected by feeding on a bird that has virus in its blood. The mosquito then transmits WNV when it bites another person or animal. Horses are ‘accidental hosts’ for WNV; mosquitoes that bite them do not become infected.

**West Nile Virus Transmission Cycle**

- **Mosquito vector**
- **West Nile virus**
- **Incidental infection**
- **Bird reservoir hosts**

**Prevention**

**Vaccinate Your Horse**
Contact your veterinarian for the vaccination. Horses should be vaccinated before summertime because that is mosquito breeding season.

**Eliminate Mosquito Breeding Sites**
Mosquitoes breed in standing water. Dump or drain any water left unmoving for more than one week. Sources can include flower pots, watering troughs and other small containers.

**Use Screens on Housing**
Well-maintained screens can help keep mosquitoes out of stalls, barns and other enclosures.

**Apply Insect Repellent for Pets**
Using insect repellent may help decrease mosquito bites. Apply according to label instructions.

**For more information, please contact:**
Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District
Santa Fe Springs: (562)944-9656
Sylmar: (818)364-9589
info@glacvcd.org
www.glacvcd.org

**Symptoms**

Horses may become infected without showing any clinical symptoms. Fever is not a common symptom. Horses can die from WNV and there is no cure. Symptoms may include:

- Stumbling and lack of coordination
- Weakness of limbs, partial paralysis or the inability to stand
- Depression or apprehension
- Muscle twitching

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