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ODH REPORTS FIRST HUMAN CASE OF WEST NILE IN 2005

COLUMBUS – Ohio has its first probable human case of West Nile virus (WNV) of 2005, the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) reported today. The patient is a 26-year-old male from Darke County.

“West Nile is now a fact of life in Ohio, even though it is a preventable disease,” said ODH Director J. Nick Baird, M.D. “Today’s news reinforces the need for Ohioans to take simple protective steps against West Nile infection whenever they venture outdoors.”

To avoid possible infection from mosquito bites:

- Avoid outdoor activities between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- If you must be outdoors, be sure to wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts, shoes and socks. Light colors are least attractive to mosquitoes.
- Use insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin or lemon eucalyptus oil and follow the label directions; generally a concentration of 30 percent DEET for adults and 10 percent or less for children.

To eliminate mosquito breeding sites near your home:

- Remove all discarded tires and other water-holding containers such as tin cans and unused flower pots, from your property. Eliminate standing water from your property.
- Make sure all roof gutters are clean and properly draining.
- Clean and chlorinate pools, outdoor saunas and hot tubs. Keep them empty when not in use and drain water from pool covers.
- Change water in bird baths weekly.

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Contact: Ohio Department of Health, Office of Public Affairs, 614-644-8562.