



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES



West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis in Dogs and Cats

Can West Nile virus (WNV) or Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) cause illness in dogs or cats?

WNV and EEE have been isolated from dogs and cats. Most cats or dogs infected with these viruses fully recover from the infection. There is no specific therapy, but in more severe cases, supportive treatment may be indicated.

How do dogs or cats become infected with WNV/EEE?

Dogs and cats become infected the same way humans become infected: by the bite of an infected mosquito. There is also evidence that cats can become infected with the virus after eating experimentally infected mice.

Can humans contract WNV/EEE directly from dogs and cats?

These viruses are not passed from dogs and cats to humans by contact with body fluids or in other ways. Furthermore, they are not spread from animal to animal either. Veterinarians should take normal infection control precautions when caring for an animal suspected of having these or any other viral infection.

Should a dog or cat infected with WNV/EEE be destroyed?

No. There is no reason to destroy an animal just because it has been infected with WNV/EEE. Full recovery from the infection is likely. Treatment would be supportive and consistent with standard veterinary practices for animals infected with a viral agent.

Can I use insect repellent on my pets?

Repellents recommended for humans are **not** approved for veterinary use (largely because animals tend to ingest them by licking). Talk with your veterinarian for advice about the appropriate product for use on your pet.

**For more information, call the New Hampshire Department of Health
and Human Services WNV/EEE Information Line at
1-866-273-NILE (6453)**