

Angela Braun, R.S.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

Telephone (617) 993-2720
Fascimile (617) 993-2721
abraun@belmont-ma.gov

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



BOARD OF HEALTH
DAVID B. ALPER, D.P.M.
DONNA S. DAVID, R.N., M.N.
JULIE C. LEMAY, M.P.H.

P.O. BOX 56, 19 MOORE STREET
BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS 02478

Arbovirus Surveillance Program Report

August 1, 2016

West Nile Virus Risk Level Increased to Moderate

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) has reported West Nile virus positive mosquitoes from Boston, Waltham, and Arlington. Due to these findings, and past isolations in this focal area, the risk for human infection for WNV has increased to moderate in the communities of Cambridge, **Belmont**, Newton, Boston, Waltham, Arlington, and Watertown. Additional findings in neighboring towns are likely within the next few weeks. The current warm weather and pattern of precipitation events have produced large mosquito populations among species most likely to spread West Nile virus (*Culex* species). Some risk from WNV exists everywhere. These are routine risk level changes.

August and early September is the peak period for WNV human transmission, residents are urged to avoid mosquito bites regardless of where they live. You may check your risk level throughout the season by going to the website www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito. You may also find useful prevention information at www.mass.gov/mosquitoesandticks.

Establish good habits now:

- Pick a repellent with an EPA-approved active ingredient
- Use long sleeves to cover up when possible
- Repair screens
- Remove standing water to help reduce mosquito populations
- Teach children to be aware of mosquito activity around them and avoid it

Zika Virus Risk

Zika virus continues to be very active in the Caribbean, Mexico, and Central and South America. The mosquitoes that spread this disease are active during the day.

Travelers who are pregnant or part of a couple planning on becoming pregnant soon are advised not to travel to areas with ongoing Zika virus transmission. The most current information about locations at risk can be found here <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/active-countries.html>. If residents choose to travel, prevent mosquito exposure by: using EPA registered mosquito repellents, cover exposed skin by wearing long-sleeved shirts and pants, stay in places with screens and air-conditioning, or sleep under mosquito netting. Talk to your healthcare provider for more information.

