



**Grant County Health District – Always Working for a Safer and Healthier Grant County**

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<b>FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 11/23/10</b>	<b>FOR INFORMATION CONTACT</b>
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**Grant County Confirms First Human West Nile Virus Case of 2010**

GRANT COUNTY, WA – A Grant County woman in her 70s tested positive for West Nile Virus infection, becoming Grant County’s first confirmed human West Nile Virus case in 2010. The Grant County Health District received notification on Thursday, November 18, 2010. The virus was found in mosquitoes and birds in 2010 and in previous years. Statewide West Nile virus totals can be found by visiting the Washington State Department of Health at [www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/ts/Zoo/WNV/surveillance10.html](http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/ts/Zoo/WNV/surveillance10.html).

The woman was likely infected west of Moses Lake in an area where several positive mosquito samples were collected. She experienced several symptoms that are characteristic of a West Nile virus and is currently not hospitalized. With the coming of colder weather, it is likely the mosquito season is over. However, this case reminds us we need to remain vigilant in protecting ourselves from mosquitoes when warmer weather arrives.

West Nile virus is spread to people and animals by infected mosquitoes. In 80% of cases, the infection does not result in any symptoms. Adults over 50 and persons with weakened immune systems are at greatest risk of serious illness from a West Nile infection. Those that do develop symptoms typically develop symptoms between 3 and 14 days after they are bitten by an infected mosquito.

The disease can take two forms; the milder of which is known as West Nile fever. In addition to fever, people with this form of the disease may also experience headache, body aches, skin rash, and swollen lymph glands.

The more severe form of West Nile infection is known as encephalitis (an inflammation of the brain). People with encephalitis may experience high fever, headache, neck stiffness, disorientation, tremors, convulsions, paralysis and coma. Anyone with any of these symptoms should immediately contact their health care provider.

There is no specific treatment or human vaccine for West Nile virus. The best way to protect yourself and your family is to avoid mosquito bites and reduce the places mosquitoes live and breed around your home.

**Washington State’s West Nile Virus Web Site:** [www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/ts/Zoo/WNV/WNV.html](http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/ts/Zoo/WNV/WNV.html)