

TEST ANSWERS: West Nile Virus Safety

1. West Nile virus:

a) Is transmitted through house pets

b) Will not show any symptoms in approximately 80% of people who are infected

c) Can be prevented with a vaccine

d) None of the above

RATIONALE: Approximately 80% of people infected with West Nile virus will not show any symptoms. The West Nile Virus is usually spread by the bite of a mosquito that has fed on an infected bird, and while there currently is a vaccine for horses, there is not a vaccine for humans. In 2017, the first confirmed case of West Nile virus was identified in a mosquito.

2. Adults over 50 and those with underlying conditions or weaker immune systems are at greater risk of experiencing life-threatening complications.

a) True

b) False

RATIONALE: Health Canada estimates that fewer than 1% of those infected will develop severe symptoms and life-threatening complications, but those over 50 years old and with weaker immune systems are at greater risk.

3. Serious symptoms of West Nile virus include: (Circle all that apply)

a) Rapid onset of severe headache

b) High fever

c) Stiff neck

d) Nausea

e) drowsiness

RATIONALE: Rapid onset of severe headache, high fever, stiff neck, nausea or vomiting, difficulty swallowing, drowsiness and confusion are all serious symptoms of West Nile virus.

4. It is not possible to transmit West Nile virus through blood transfusions.

a) True

b) False

RATIONALE: In very rare cases, West Nile virus can be spread through blood transfusions, organ or tissue transplants, pregnancy, breast milk or exposure to infected medical specimens.

5. To prevent West Nile virus, you should: (Circle all that apply)

SAFETY TOPIC – West Nile Virus Safety

- a) Always keep outdoor water buckets and rainwater barrels full
- b) **Cover exposed skin**
- c) **Use insect repellent**
- d) **Reduce mosquito habitats near your home**

RATIONALE: Preventative measures for West Nile virus include covering exposed skin, using insect repellent and reducing mosquito habitats near your home by draining or drying off water in common areas where it can accumulate such as outdoor water buckets and rainwater barrels.