



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

Ashwin Vasan, MD, PhD  
Commissioner

**Health Advisory #17**  
**Pesticide Spraying to Prevent West Nile Virus Continues in New York City**

*Please distribute to staff in the department of emergency medicine*

August 21, 2023

Dear Colleagues,

The New York Health Department continues to spray pesticide overnight from trucks in neighborhoods where surveillance finds rising numbers of West Nile Virus-infected.

- Most people do not experience symptoms from this low level of exposure. Some sensitive individuals may experience transient effects, such as skin, eye and mucous membrane irritation, or exacerbation of chronic conditions, such as asthma or other respiratory conditions.
- We advise that people stay indoors during overnight ground spraying. We notify residents of upcoming spray events by issuing press releases, posting flyers in the area, and providing information on the Department website [Mosquito Control – NYC Health](#).
- The Department uses a very low rate of Anvil® (containing the active ingredient sumithrin), Duet® (containing sumithrin and prallethrin), or MERUS® 3 (containing pyrethrin).

If you suspect a patient may have pesticide poisoning, contact the NYC Poison Center (NYCPC) at 212-764-7667 (212-POISONS). The NYC Health Code and the NYS Sanitary Code require reporting confirmed or suspected pesticide poisonings; in addition to calling NYCPC, report cases to the New York State Department of Health, Pesticide Poisoning Registry at (800)-322-6850.

Remind your patients that they can prevent mosquito bites by wearing protective clothing and using insect repellents. Mosquito repellents containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR3535 are effective when applied according to label instructions before going outdoors in areas where mosquitoes are active.

To see where the NYC Health Department is conducting spray events and learn more about mosquito control products, visit [Mosquito Control - NYC Health](#). For a copy of the Anvil®, Duet® or MERUS® 3.0 labels and Safety Data Sheets, call 311 or email [mosquito@health.nyc.gov](mailto:mosquito@health.nyc.gov).

Thank you for your help keeping New Yorkers healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Corinne Schiff'.

Corinne Schiff  
Deputy Commissioner, Environmental Health