West Nile Virus Update

With West Nile Virus (WNV) activity increasing in summer months, it’s a good time to take additional precautions to protect ourselves from mosquito bites. The California Department of Public Health has reported the first WNV-associated fatality this year in a woman from Kern County. As of August 16, 2012, a total of 26 human cases of WNV illness have been reported in 10 local health jurisdictions: Butte (1), Fresno (4), Kern (6), Los Angeles (2), Merced (1), Orange (1), Sacramento (2), San Joaquin (2), Stanislaus (6), and Ventura (1). Of the 26 cases, 15 (58%) had neuroinvasive illness. Dates of symptom onset for all cases ranged from May 23–August 2, 2012. A total of 12 WNV-positive blood donors have been reported this year; 4 individuals developed symptoms and were reclassified as cases. As of August 9, 2012, a total of 18 human cases of WNV illness have been reported in 8 local health jurisdictions: Fresno (4), Los Angeles (1), Merced (1), Orange (1), Sacramento (2), San Joaquin (1), and Stanislaus (4). Of the 18 cases, 9 (50%) had neuroinvasive illness, including two pediatric cases. WNV activity has been reported in 29 of 59 counties in California suggesting an increase in activity compared to last year. There have been no human cases of WNV in Santa Barbara County this year so far.

Patient Education

WNV is transmitted to humans and animals by the bite of an infected mosquito. Although the risk of serious illness to most people is low, some individuals, less than one percent, can develop serious neurologic illness such as encephalitis or meningitis. People age 50 and older have a higher chance of becoming ill and developing complications. It is important to educate patients and the general public about measures to protect themselves against mosquito-borne diseases. Preventive measures to share with your patients include:

DRAIN: Mosquitoes lay their eggs on standing water. Young mosquitoes grow in the water. Get rid of standing water around your home. Empty water out of buckets, old tires, flower pots, and keep children’s wading pools empty and on their sides when they aren’t being used. Change water daily for pets and weekly for bird baths.

DUSK AND DAWN: Mosquitoes that transmit WNV bite in the early morning and early evening hours, and sometimes throughout the night. If you go out in the early morning or evening hours, wear long pants and a long sleeved shirt.

DEFEND: Use an EPA-registered insect repellent with DEET, picaridin, IR3535 or oil of lemon eucalyptus in it. Put the repellent on your skin that is not covered by clothes. Follow the directions carefully. Keep mosquitoes out of your home with window and door screens. Additional information may be found at http://www.westnile.ca.gov.

Disease Reporting

Please continue to report encephalitis, meningitis and suspect WNV cases by FAXing a Confidential Morbidity Report (CMR) to the Santa Barbara County Disease Control Unit (805) 681-4069. Electronic reporting is also encouraged via the CalREDIE Provider Portal. If you are interested in submitting CMRs electronically via the Provider Portal, please call (805) 681-5280 for more information.
Each year, Maternal Child and Adolescent Health (MCAH) submits an Annual Report on the state of Santa Barbara County’s (SBC) women and children, health disparities and details of how the MCAH scope of work has been met. These reports can be found at [www.sbcphd.org/MCAH](http://www.sbcphd.org/MCAH). In addition, specific data relating to the MCAH Field Nursing Program, the referral process, and community collaborative achievements are on this site.

The majority of SBC residents live in the cities of Santa Maria (23.5%), Santa Barbara (20.9%) and Lompoc (10.0%). The North (Santa Maria/Guadalupe) and Central (Lompoc/Valley) regions of the County have greater percentages of families that are young, Hispanic, and Spanish speaking. Compared to South County, the North and Central regions have higher rates of poverty, teen births, lack of health insurance and unemployment. According to census 2010 data, 79.4% of Santa Maria City and 96.2% of Guadalupe residents identified as Hispanic.

In 2010, the majority of births in Santa Barbara County were to Hispanic women (67% - 3902/5819). Births to non-Hispanic white women totaled 27% (1570/5819). In North County, 80.6% of the total births were from women of Hispanic ethnicity. That year, 60.6% of county-wide births were to women on Medi-Cal. Further, 77% of all births in North County were to Medi-Cal recipients.

It is estimated that between 15-25,000 Mixtecs have immigrated to work in the Santa Maria area in recent years. Mixtecs face greater challenges than other Hispanic immigrants due to low levels of education, lack of English, limited Spanish, no written language, isolation, and limited access to services.

In 2010, 11.0% (638/5819) of total births in SBC were to teen mothers. Births to teenage mothers comprised 14.6% (568/3,902) of all Hispanic births county-wide. In North County, 66.4% (1885) of mothers had first trimester prenatal care as compared with 82.7% (1639) in South County. The MCAH program field nursing unit focuses its services to these low-income pregnant and parenting mothers who experience barriers to care.

Lompoc and Santa Maria regions receive over 75% of all Alcohol and Drug treatment funding. In fiscal year 2010-11, 35% (790/2260) of individuals receiving Alcohol and Drug treatment in SBC were women, 11% of these women were pregnant and 57% were mothers of children < 18 years of age. The needs for this population are far greater than the resources. (Source: SBC ADMHS)

In 2009, California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) data showed that of the 105,127 children in SBC, ages 1-17, approximately 45% were on some form of public health insurance: Medi-Cal 34% (35,385); Healthy Families 10% (10,671); Healthy Kids 1% (1,004). By region, 65% of these children resided in the North County, and 35% resided in South County. In North County, 51.5% (N 1460) of mothers had an education less than a GED equivalent as compared to South County with 36.4%.

### Births By Race/Ethnicity, Santa Barbara County 2010

- **67%** Hispanic
- **27%** White
- **3%** Asian
- **2%** Two or More Races
- **1%** Black
- **0%** American Indian
- **0%** Pacific Islander

Source: Santa Barbara County Public Health Department, Vital Records.