

***THE CANADIAN COALITION FOR HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT (CCHE)***  
**IS LAUNCHED COAST TO COAST**

WEST NILE VIRUS COALITION RELEASES NATIONAL STATEMENT  
URGING SAFE STRATEGIES (see attached).

**Scientists, doctors, member groups and concerned citizens in all provinces across Canada, including Nova Scotia, recommend non-pesticide control methods, and less media "hype" over unfounded WNV concerns. Website CCHE [www.cche-info.com](http://www.cche-info.com).**

## **WEST NILE VIRUS - PUTTING IT IN PERSPECTIVE**

**WNV is not recognized as being active in NS. In areas where it is active,**

- less than 1% of mosquitoes are infected (and half of those are non-biting males).

**Of the 27 species found in NS, not all bite humans, only about 1/3 carry the virus,**

- if bitten, less than 1% of people show any symptoms, even mild ones,
- of people becoming ill, less than 1% become seriously ill, and these have high rates

**of recovery. That's a probability of serious illness of  $<.005 \times <.01 \times <.01$  in areas with more WNV than Nova Scotia. The risk of West Nile is minimal.**

**WNV RISK ANYWHERE IN CANADA IS LESS THAN THAT ASSOCIATED WITH COMING DOWN WITH THE FLU.**

**Pesticides damage both the ecosystem and the immune system of humans and that of many mosquito predators and birds, reducing their numbers, their effectiveness and rendering them less able to fight off infections from viruses and bacteria. This is the exact opposite of what is needed.** Last year of 440 dead birds found in NS, only 4 were carrying the virus. In many areas of N. America, many more dead birds appear to be killed by pesticides than WNV. Some birds may have contracted WNV because of weakened immune systems caused by pesticide exposure.

**Fortunately, the NS Provincial Minister of Health, the NS Provincial West Nile Virus Committee (chaired by Dr. Maureen Baikie), and our Medical Officers of Health are on track and have, so far, supported a very sensible program of monitoring the situation, and educating the public on sensible protection measures. They deserve to be congratulated.**

**Healthy Immune systems and Diverse Ecosystems are our best lines of defense against WNV - PESTICIDE-FREE METHODS are needed to deal with WNV. In areas where WNV is prevalent, human immunity has become more widespread. Prescription: frequent application of safer repellents such as Bite Blocker, lemon balm, Buzz Away, catnip, Kiss Off, Fly Screen (many are superior to DEET if frequently applied), clean out & elimination of breeding sites close to homes, use of biological controls approved by organic review bodies, AND the encouragement of healthy and diverse ecosystems.**