



WEST NILE VIRUS INFORMATION SHEET

Your test shows that **you may have been infected with West Nile Virus at the time of your donation.** While this may have no health implications for you, the positive test means that you cannot donate blood for 120 days following your positive (reactive) donation. You may want to share this information including the enclosed test results with your personal physician.

What is West Nile Virus?

WNV is a flavivirus that has been commonly found in Africa, West Asia, the Middle East, and in the U.S. since 1999. It is closely related to St. Louis encephalitis virus found in the United States. The virus is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito, and can infect people, horses, many types of birds, and some other animals. Recently, it has been shown that WNV may also be transmitted by blood transfusion. Most people who become infected with WNV will have either no symptoms, or only mild symptoms. However, on rare occasions (<1%), WNV infection can result in severe and, very rarely, even fatal illnesses.

What else can you tell me about the West Nile Virus infection?

It is possible to have WNV and not know that you are infected. Approximately 75% of persons infected with WNV have no symptoms. Less than 25% have fever only or other mild symptoms. Only a very small percentage of people with WNV infection (<1%) experience severe symptoms such as encephalitis, a brain inflammation.

What are the important Do's and Don'ts that I should follow?

- Do not donate blood, plasma, tissues or organs for 120 days following your positive (reactive) donation.
- Do not breast feed until you have checked with your physician.
- Do not share things that can be contaminated with blood or body fluids like needles.

Where can I get more information?

Additional information on WNV infection, including prevention measures, signs and symptoms of WNV infection, and links to other sites (e.g., FDA, state and local health departments), is available at the following CDC website: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm>.