

# Protecting Yourself from Disease Carrying Insects

A Reference Guide to  
Mosquitoes, Ticks,  
West Nile Virus and  
Lyme Disease



May 2009

**Dear Fairfax County Resident,**

The Fairfax County Health Department's Disease Carrying Insects Program is working to minimize the risk of West Nile virus and Lyme disease transmission to County residents and visitors. This "Reference Guide to Mosquitoes, Ticks, West Nile virus and Lyme Disease" was developed to help you to have a better understanding of how to protect yourself, your family and your yard from mosquitoes, ticks and the diseases they transmit.

The Health Department's surveillance efforts, coupled with proactive inspection and treatment of breeding habitats, provide County residents with a high degree of protection. County efforts alone are not enough; well-informed and active residents are needed partners to combat disease-carrying insects in our community.

It is my belief that education, preparation and action are key factors in breaking the disease transmission cycle. Please take a few minutes to read about West Nile virus and Lyme disease and take action to protect yourself and your family from insect-borne disease. To support this education effort, Health Department staff are available to inspect your property for mosquito breeding sites, identify ticks and speak with community groups about mosquitoes and ticks.

Thank you for taking the time to read this valuable information and please feel free to contact the Health Department with your thoughts about this booklet. I hope it is helpful to you and your family. Together we can achieve our vision and your desire of "Healthy People in Healthy Communities".

Sincerely,



Gloria Addo-Ayensu, M.D., M.P.H.  
Director of Health  
Fairfax County Health Department

To contact the Health Department with comments, questions or concerns, please call 703-246-2300 TTY 703-591-6435 e-mail us at [FightTheBite@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:FightTheBite@fairfaxcounty.gov)

# Inside this Guide

<b>West Nile Virus and Mosquitoes</b> . . . . .	2
What is West Nile Virus? . . . . .	2
The West Nile Virus Transmission Cycle . . . . .	2
What are the Signs and Symptoms of West Nile Virus? . . . . .	3
Who is at Risk for West Nile Virus? . . . . .	3
The Mosquito Life Cycle . . . . .	4
How to Get Rid of Adult Mosquitoes Around Your Home . . . . .	5
<i>Culex</i> Mosquitoes and West Nile Virus . . . . .	6
The Asian Tiger Mosquito: Fairfax County's #1 Nuisance Mosquito . . . . .	7
Stop Mosquitoes Where They Start: How to Eliminate Mosquito Larvae Around Your Home . . . . .	8
Breeding Site Check List . . . . .	9
<b>Lyme Disease and Ticks</b> . . . . .	10
What is Lyme Disease? . . . . .	10
What are the Signs and Symptoms of Lyme Disease? . . . . .	10
The Tick Life Cycle . . . . .	11
Protect and Check: Preventing Tick Bites . . . . .	12
How Do You Properly Remove a Tick? . . . . .	13
How to Make Your Yard a Tick-free Zone . . . . .	14
<b>Repellents</b> . . . . .	15
What is the Best Repellent? . . . . .	15
What You Should Know About Your Children and DEET . . . . .	16

