

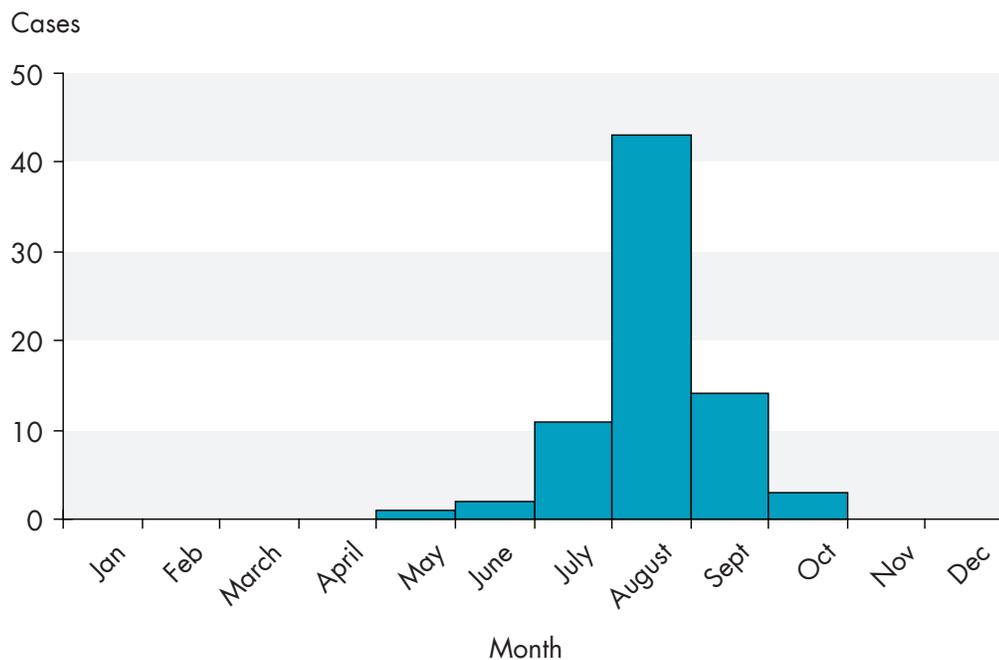
West Nile virus

West Nile virus (WNV) first appeared in the U.S. in 1999, and has moved westward across the U.S. In Oregon, the first case was reported in 2004. West Nile virus is a mosquito-borne virus that affects both animals and humans. Birds are the reservoir; humans and other animals are considered “dead-end” hosts.

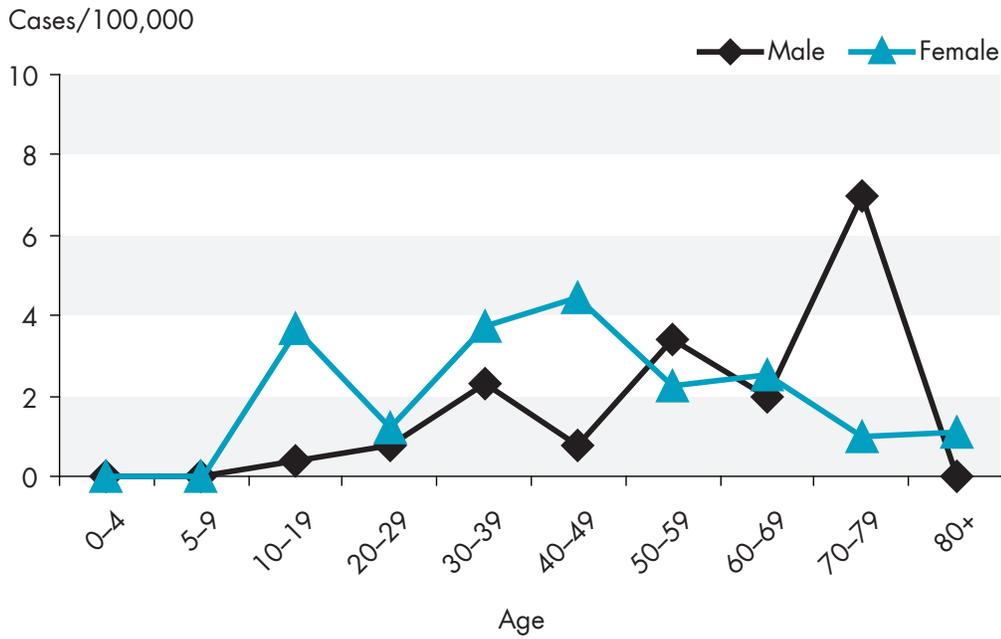
Of those infected, one in five will have mild symptoms such as fever, headache and muscle aches; fewer persons, about one in 150, will have more severe symptoms that may include neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, paralysis and coma. The risk of getting West Nile virus in Oregon has been very low. Though most cases were in those aged 20–50 years, those over 50 years of age have the highest risk of developing serious illness.

The year 2006 saw the ramping up of WNV in Oregon with 73 laboratory-confirmed cases and two deaths in our human population. The incidence in summer months is higher. Most (82%) presented with uncomplicated fever, though 11% of cases suffered encephalitis or meningitis. Three-quarters of Oregon cases were Malheur County residents. Most (64%) were female and 39% of cases were older than 50 years of age. Only Baker and Union counties had positive mosquito pools, all of which were *Culex tarsalis*.

West Nile virus by month of onset - Oregon, 2006



West Nile virus by age and sex - Oregon, 2006



Incidence of West Nile virus by county of residence - Oregon, 2006

