

# DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

La Crosse encephalitis gets its name from La Crosse, Wisconsin, where the infection was first recognized in 1963. La Crosse encephalitis is one of a group of mosquito-borne virus diseases that can affect the central nervous system and cause severe complications and even death. Other similar diseases are eastern equine encephalitis, western equine encephalitis, and St. Louis encephalitis.

ADAPTED FROM INFORMATION  
PROVIDED BY:



# LA CROSSE ENCEPHALITIS



***WHAT STEPS CAN YOU  
TAKE TO PROTECT  
YOURSELF AND YOUR  
FAMILY?***

Created July, 2007

**Q: Where is La Crosse Encephalitis found?**

A: La Crosse encephalitis is common in the hardwood forest areas of the upper Midwestern United States and in the Appalachian region. Locally, mosquitoes throughout Warren County are being collected and tested for the virus.

**Q: What causes La Crosse?**

A: La Crosse is caused by a virus which has a mosquito vector: *Aedes triseriatus*.

**Q: What are the signs and symptoms of the virus?**

A: La Crosse encephalitis is usually a mild illness, with fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, and tiredness. People with severe disease, usually children, can have seizures, coma, paralysis, and lasting brain damage.

**Q: How is La Crosse Encephalitis diagnosed?**

A: Diagnosis is based on tests of blood or spinal fluid.

**IT'S IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER:**



Anyone can get La Crosse encephalitis, but some people are at increased risk:

- Children
- People who live in or visit woodland habitats
- People who work outside or participate in outdoor recreational activities in areas where the disease is common

~~~~~  
◇ *There is no specific treatment for La Crosse encephalitis.*

◇ *Antibiotics are not effective against viruses, and no effective anti-viral drugs have been discovered. Care of patients centers on treatment of symptoms and complications.*

~~~~~

**Q: How can I take prevent contracting the disease?**

**A: To avoid being bitten by the mosquitoes that cause La Crosse encephalitis:**

- Eliminate breeding sites (tires, buckets, cans, etc.) near houses.



- When outside, wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts.
- Treat exposed skin with an insect repellent.
- Stay indoors during dusk and dawn, the time when mosquitoes are most active.