



Emerging and Reemerging Infectious Diseases, Region of the Americas

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Update on West Nile Virus in Mexico

Up to 10 December 2003, 591 people underwent serological tests for WNV in 25 states. Six people have shown positive results: four in Chihuahua, one in Sonora, and another in Nuevo León. Three of the cases were classified as severe disease—West Nile encephalitis or meningitis—and the other three were classified as mild disease, or West Nile Fever. Out of 29 states collecting equine samples, viral activity was detected in 22 of them. A total of 2,475 equine samples and 2 dead horses showed positive results. Viral circulation among birds was detected in 9 out of 10 states that carried out serological tests for WNV. The results showed 117 positive cases out of 17,963 tests. Also, four dead birds were found in Sonora, Tamaulipas, Tabasco, and Nuevo León and showed positive results.

Initial phylogenetic studies in Mexico indicate that the isolated virus is related to strains from the central United States but has a relatively high degree of sequence divergence. This suggests that the virus could have been evolving elsewhere for several years.

Sources

- [Virus del Oeste del Nilo / VON](#) (*West Nile Virus / WNV*). Mexico City: Action Program for the Prevention and Control of Vector-Borne Diseases in Mexico, Secretary of Health of Mexico (México, DF: Programa de Acción para la Prevención y el Control de Enfermedades Transmitidas por Vectores en México, Secretaría de Salud). (In Spanish)
- Estrada-Franco, J.G., et. al. (2003) [Dispatch: West Nile Virus in Mexico: Evidence of Widespread Circulation since July 2002](#). *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 9 (7): 860-863 (December 2003). Atlanta: Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).