



**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Public Health • Epidemiology Section**
1902 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1902
Tel 919-733-3421 • Fax 919-733-0195

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Dempsey Benton, Secretary

Leah Devlin, DDS, MPH
State Health Director

MEMORANDUM

Date: May 9, 2008
To: NC Physicians and Laboratorians
From: Dr. Jeffrey Engel, State Epidemiologist
Dr. Leslie Wolf, Director, NC State Laboratory of Public Health
Re: Vector Borne Diseases in North Carolina

The NC Division of Public Health is seeking your assistance in identifying and diagnosing suspected cases of mosquito- and tick-borne illnesses. NC Public Health monitors human cases of vector-borne diseases, all reportable in NC, including arbovirus (West Nile, Lacrosse, Eastern Equine) and tick borne (Rocky Mountain spotted fever, Ehrlichiosis, and Lyme disease) infections. The typical season runs from April through October in North Carolina, with peak occurrence of disease in June through early September. Case definitions and reporting requirements for these illnesses can be found at the following web site: <http://www.epi.state.nc.us/epi/gcdc/manual/toc.html>. Serological (and CSF for suspect arbovirus cases) testing for antibody can be performed to aid in the clinical diagnosis and to confirm suspect cases. **Both acute and convalescent sera are strongly recommended for accurate interpretation of serological laboratory results.** Convalescent serum should be collected and sent two to three weeks after onset of illness for definitive laboratory confirmation.

Specific laboratory testing for the vector-borne diseases is available, at no charge, at the NC State Laboratory of Public Health (NCSLPH) in Raleigh; thus, we strongly encourage health care providers to use this resource. It will also improve the timeliness and accuracy of NC Public Health surveillance efforts. Specimens should be sent with an accompanying form (DHHS #3445) available on the NCSLPH website at <http://slph.state.nc.us> (under the "Virology/Serology" tab, click on "Forms".) Please fill out forms completely, including signs and symptoms and travel history. When appropriate, tests may be requested as an "Arbovirus Panel" or a "Rickettsia Panel" since the NCSLPH will automatically test for all relevant mosquito-borne viruses or tick-borne bacteria, respectively. We appreciate your efforts in improving the health of your patients and the larger community of NC citizens.

cc: Dr. Leah Devlin, State Health Director; Dr. Steve Cline, Deputy State Health Director



North Carolina Public Health
Working for a healthier and safer North Carolina
Everywhere. Everyday. Everybody.



Location: 306 N. Wilmington Street • Bath Building • Raleigh, N.C. 27601