

# West Nile Virus: Keep it on your radar!



## Why test for West Nile virus?

- Mosquito control and public health agencies can institute proper control measures to prevent further cases
- Testing differentiates WNV from other conditions (enterovirus, other arboviral diseases)
- Testing results offer anticipatory guidance--both WNV neuroinvasive disease and WN fever patients can have lingering symptoms and knowing the underlying etiology is helpful for the patient and family members.

## When should West Nile virus testing be done?

- ▶ Usually April – November for patients presenting with:
  - Encephalitis
  - Aseptic meningitis
  - Acute flaccid paralysis, atypical Guillain-Barré syndrome, transverse myelitis, or
  - Febrile illness ( $T \geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$  for  $> 7$  days), other symptoms may include headache, rash, swollen lymph nodes, eye pain, nausea, or vomiting

## What is West Nile virus?

- ▶ A mosquito-borne virus related to St. Louis encephalitis virus, yellow fever, and dengue
- ▶ Introduced to the U.S. in 1999 and California in 2003
- ▶ 3,146 cases were detected in California between 2003 and 2011
- ▶ Infection may result in febrile illnesses of variable severity sometimes associated with central nervous system (CNS) involvement

## Where and how to test for West Nile virus

- ▶ Contact your local health department for details
- ▶ Acute serum specimen ( $\geq 2\text{cc}$ ) and, if lumbar puncture performed, 1-2 cc cerebrospinal fluid are required for testing
  - Public Health labs may offer free testing

## Where can I get more information?

- WNV: Keep It On Your Radar: <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Documents/KeepWNVonYourRadar.pps>
- CA WNV website: [www.westnile.ca.gov](http://www.westnile.ca.gov)
- CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm>
- Cynthia Yen, MPH, Communicable Disease Emergency Response Branch: 510-620-3987

