

FROM THE FRONT

WEST NILE

from AI

and Lexington) have seen the highest number of cases, with Lexington now spraying mosquito control insecticide in areas with large mosquito populations.

According to the CDC, approximately 80% of people infected with WNV experience no symptoms, while about 20% experience a mild flu-like illness, characterized by symptoms such as headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. Those who experience mild illness typically recover completely, although tiredness and weakness can last for weeks or months. However, for a few others, less than 1%, such as in the McCreary County case, symptoms can be debilitating, including

encephalitis, meningitis, high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness, and paralysis. Recovery from severe illness can take weeks or months, and some effects may be permanent. The risk for severe illness increases with age, especially after 65, and for those with weakened immune systems or with certain chronic medical conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, cancer, or kidney disease.

“This has been 100 times worse than anything medical I have ever gone through,” the McCreary County convalescent, who continues to recover and improve at home after spending approximately six weeks at Corbin Baptist Hospital and Rehabilitation Center.

“It was worse than when I went through cancer treatments. With cancer treatments, I would get tired and maybe not feel good, but I could rest and continue. This took away my freedom, as I wasn’t able to do many of the things I wanted to do. For a time, I had to have help with absolutely everything.”

The McCreary County case has no idea when or where the mosquito bite occurred. Typically, it takes 2 or 3 up to 14 days after an infectious bite for symptoms to appear. With that as a guideline, the McCreary County resident was probably bitten by an infected mosquito in late July or early August. The person had been mainly in McCreary County, but had travelled briefly to Pigeon Forge and Mammoth Cave.

“I felt a little tired and had a low-grade fever

for a couple of days during the week,” the infected resident recalled. “Nothing to make me go to the doctor. On Saturday, I slept a lot and was really fatigued. My daughter said I needed to go to the doctor, so I did on the following day. My bloodwork was OK, and they prescribed me some medicine. On Monday morning, I was going to go to the pharmacy to pick up my prescriptions, and it just hit me. I collapsed in my yard and couldn’t get up. My grandson found me and got me into his car. My daughter called Corbin Baptist ER and told them we were coming. I kept telling my grandson that I needed to change clothes and clean up a bit, but he just said, ‘Nana, we’re going to the hospital.’”

At the hospital, the McCreary County resident was hooked to

IVs, antibiotics, and underwent multiple tests. Doctors were stumped, but after three or four days, test results revealed the diagnosis of West Nile Virus. The diagnosis came without a specific treatment plan, as there is currently no specific treatment for WNV. Instead, treatment focuses on managing symptoms, including rest, hydration, monitoring for additional symptoms, and fever reduction.

“Everyone was shocked,” the McCreary County case patient recalled. “Two of the doctors in the rehabilitation center had never treated a case of WNV. It affected different parts of my body, primarily my lower body, including my ability to walk and perform other activities. It also affected my speech. I was very fatigued, developed a

fever, and had no appetite. I never got really physically ill—no vomiting or anything like that. When it hit me, it just literally hit me, and I collapsed.”

Blessedly, the McCreary County WNV victim recently returned home, where recovery continues. Although still not walking totally unaided, it is a relief to be home, on the mend, and able to share accolades about the doctors, nurses, therapists, and staff at Corbin Baptist who intervened.

“Baptist Hospital in Corbin did an excellent job in discovering what was wrong, and the rehab did a wonderful job in getting me back up and going to the point that I could come home,” the blessed McCreary Countian said. “West Nile Virus is something I wouldn’t wish on my worst enemy.”

SMITHTOWN

from AI

it for various purposes, including a homeless shelter, private school, and youth center, among others. The district previously received approval from the Kentucky Department of Education to sell the property, but then decided against doing so.

During the meeting, the Board Members unanimously approved starting the process of sealed bids for demolition and clean-up services on the Smithtown property. In discussion, McCreary County School District Superintendent Clint Taylor stated that the district’s insurance company has declared the property a liability as it is, and that he would feel more comfortable tear-

ing it down and cleaning up the site. He noted that the property would then be suitable for a building site if needed in the future. Taylor mentioned that approximately a year ago, the estimated cost to clean up (haul off, tear down, and bury on site) the property was slightly above the \$20,000 to \$80,000 range. When asked if the bid advertisement for the Smithtown property requires specifications regarding the handling of asbestos, Taylor stated that the district has approval to bury on-site. According to the Board Attorney, there will be no time limitation on the use of the property after demolition and burial of materials because “they bury it so deep.” Superintendent Taylor pointed out that if a deci-

sion is made later to sell the property, the district must disclose the buried materials to the buyer.

During the public comment portion of the meeting, Pine Knot resident Yvonne Bryant, who lives on Anderson Lane—a short county road adjacent to Pine Knot Intermediate School—asked for help from the school district. Residents on Anderson Lane are completely blocked from entering or exiting their homes during parent pick-up times at the school. This year, Pine Knot Intermediate began using Anderson Lane as a pick-up entry point. Bryant requested that the school district take action to resolve the issue. She expressed concern for the safety of drivers in the congested area and noted

that emergency vehicles cannot access Anderson Lane residents if called during parent pick-up time.

In other business, the board approved items by consent and the 2025-2026 working budget. McCreary County

Board of Education is scheduled to meet again on October 28, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. at the Central Office.

TAYLORS HAUNTED ADVENTURES



Every Friday and Saturday in October
8:00PM - MIDNIGHT
Admission \$10

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Children 13-17 must have signed waiver by parent/guardian
EVERYONE MUST SIGN A WAIVER AT THE DOOR!

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FIRE

from AI

6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. during fire season, as it is typically cooler and winds are calmer during these hours. It is also permitted to burn at any time when the ground is covered with snow.

In addition to fall fire season restrictions, the governor can declare statewide total burn bans during this time, as can County Judge Executives. Burn bans are declared when there is an immediate risk to a particular area, and law enforcement officers and fire officials enforce such prohibitions.

Violations during burn

bans or the fall fire season are punishable by fines and/or jail sentences. Additionally, McCreary County has a local ordinance, 310.1, which allows a fine of \$50 to \$500, plus accumulated fees, to be levied against individuals who violate an official proclamation of a burn ban by the McCreary County Judge Executive when an extraordinary fire hazard exists in the county. The McCreary County Judge Executive is notified by the Kentucky Division of Forestry or the U.S. Division of Forestry when fire hazards exist, as determined by the National Fire Danger Rating System and Fire Occurrence. Such burn

ban proclamations are published in the local newspaper, on all county-operated social media sites, and on local radio, among other outlets.



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