



SENIOR NEWSLETTER



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BEAT THE BUGS

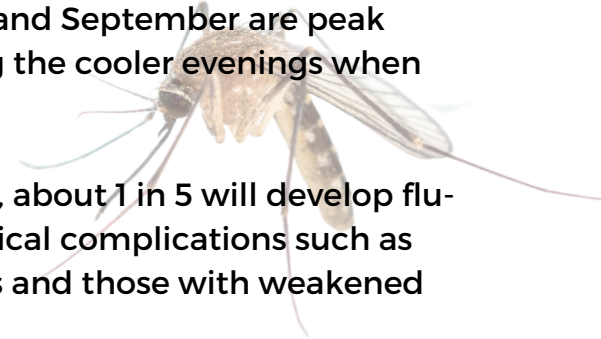
Mosquitoes Still Biting Hard in Eastern MT

August in Eastern Montana usually brings some relief from summer pests—but not this year. Local health departments report that mosquito activity remains unusually high across the region, and with it, the continued risk of West Nile virus (WNV). From Glendive to Miles City and up through Sidney and Plentywood, late-summer mosquitoes are thriving thanks to warm temperatures and recent rain.

So far this summer, multiple counties in Eastern Montana have reported mosquitoes testing positive for WNV, and several horse cases have been confirmed. Public health officials stress that August and September are peak months for West Nile transmission—especially during the cooler evenings when mosquitoes are most active.

While most people who get West Nile won't feel sick, about 1 in 5 will develop flu-like symptoms, and severe cases can cause neurological complications such as swelling of the brain, paralysis, or death. Older adults and those with weakened immune systems are especially vulnerable.

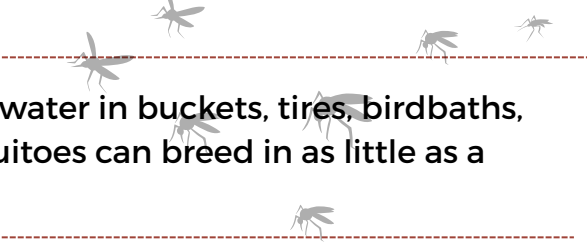
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Protecting Yourself from the Bite

How to Beat the Bugs This August

Experts recommend sticking to the “4 D’s” to stay protected while enjoying the last stretch of summer:



D	What to Do
Drain	Get rid of standing water in buckets, tires, birdbaths, and troughs. Mosquitoes can breed in as little as a capful of water.
Dress	Wear long sleeves and pants when outside, especially during dawn and dusk hours.
DEET	Use insect repellent with DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus. Reapply as directed.
Dusk & Dawn	Avoid outdoor activities at sunrise and sunset when mosquitoes are most active. If you’re out, be sure to use repellent and cover up.

Even as we get closer to cooler weather, don’t let your guard down. Keep the repellent handy, drain standing water, and stay alert for symptoms. West Nile virus won’t leave until the mosquitoes do—and that likely won’t happen until we see a hard frost in October. Stay safe, Eastern Montana – and swat smart this August!

“I Thought It Was Just a Bug Bite...”

Margaret S., age 72, from Wibaux, didn’t think much of the mosquito bite she got while watering her garden last August—until a few days later, when she started feeling exhausted and achy.

“I just felt off,” she said. “I thought maybe I had the flu. I never imagined it could be West Nile.” But a visit to her local clinic and some bloodwork confirmed it; she had West Nile.

Luckily, she recovered fully, but it took weeks before she felt like herself again.

Her advice?

“Use the bug spray. I never used to, but I do now—every time I go outside.”

FALL HEALTH REMINDERS

Stay Well as the Seasons Change

As cooler mornings and shorter days return to Eastern Montana, now is the time to start thinking ahead about your fall health routine. Here are a few easy ways to stay healthy, safe, and active as we transition into autumn:

Get Your Fall Vaccines

- **Flu Shot:** Flu season can start as early as October, and seniors are especially at risk of complications. Plan to get your flu shot in September or early October.
- **COVID Booster:** A new COVID booster may be available this fall—check with your doctor or pharmacy.
- **RSV Vaccine:** If you're over 60, ask your healthcare provider if the RSV vaccine is right for you.

Review Medications & Appointments

- Refill any long-term prescriptions before bad weather hits.
- If you see your doctor seasonally, now's a good time to schedule your annual check-up or fall wellness visit.

Dress in Layers

Fall weather in Montana can shift quickly—from warm afternoons to chilly evenings. Dressing in layers helps your body adjust and can prevent cold stress or illness.

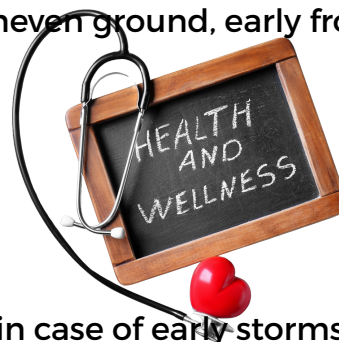
Stay Active — Safely

Even light daily movement, like walking or stretching, helps support balance, mobility, and mood. Just be mindful of uneven ground, early frost, or low visibility as the days shorten.

Prepare for Winter

Take time now to:

- Clean or service your heating system.
- Check carbon monoxide detectors.
- Stock up on non-perishables and medications in case of early storms.
- Review your emergency contact list and ensure someone checks in regularly.



Taking small steps now can help you stay strong, independent, and ready for the colder months ahead. Don't wait for the first snowflake — your health matters this fall.

A SPECIAL STOP

Circle Senior Center Hosts Cross-Country Cyclists for MS

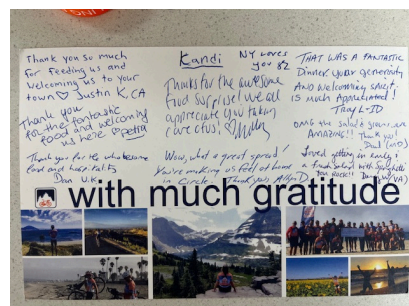
In late July, a remarkable group of cyclists rolled into Circle, MT with a mission—and found a warm welcome at the local senior center.

Over 35 cyclists with Bike MS, the world's largest cycling fundraiser for multiple sclerosis, arrived in need of a place to rest. Without hesitation, the community opened its doors and hearts.



The riders were greeted with snacks and beverages at the senior center before heading across the street to Round Town Customs, where they were treated to something extra special: a chance to pick out a custom-designed shirt made just for them, created and pressed on the spot as a souvenir of their visit.

That evening, the Kandi Carlstad family prepared a salad bar and spaghetti dinner for the riders, who then spent the night on the senior center floor—grateful, kind, and full of stories from the road. The next morning, a hot breakfast was waiting for them before they hit the road again by 5:30 a.m.



A Global Effort, A Local Connection

These cyclists are riding for a cure—having started their journey back on June 7th in Maine, with plans to finish in Seattle in three weeks. Along the way, they've formed a moving community of riders from across the U.S. and beyond, including folks from Sweden, the UK, and other countries. Hosting them was not only an honor, but a reminder of the power of small towns and big hearts. In their words, the hospitality they were shown made the stop in Circle one of the most memorable of their long journey.

THE PERFECT FALL ROADTRIP

Plan a Trip to Helena for the MT Governor's Conference on Aging

Looking for something meaningful, educational, and fun this fall? Consider attending the 56th Annual Montana Governor's Conference on Aging, happening September 15-17 at the Great Northern Hotel in Helena.

This annual event is a great opportunity for older adults, caregivers, and professionals to come together to learn, connect, and explore new ideas related to healthy aging in Montana.

Why Attend?

- **Learn about important topics** like health care, long-term care, financial security, age-friendly communities, and more.
- **Hear from guest speakers and experts** on senior wellness, caregiving, and local resources.
- **Connect with others** from across the state who care about aging issues.
- **Celebrate Montana's centenarians** at a special luncheon honoring residents who are 100 years old or older!

There will also be a Long-Term Care Summit on Sept. 15, a silent auction to raise funds for senior services, and plenty of chances to share your voice and ideas.

How to Attend

- Registration is \$100 per person and due by September 1st.
- The event will be held at the Great Northern Hotel in Helena, with lodging available at nearby hotels.
- Travel arrangements are on your own, but some local senior centers may be organizing group transportation. Ask your local staff if you're interested in joining others!

Nominate a Centenarian to Be Honored!

One of the most beloved traditions of the Governor's Conference is the Centenarian Celebration—where Montana residents who are 100 years old or older are honored by name and receive a certificate from the Governor. If you know someone turning 100 in 2025 or someone who has already reached that amazing milestone, you can nominate them to be recognized at the event! The deadline to submit is August 23, 2025. Nomination forms and conference registration forms are available at:

 dphhs.mt.gov/sltc/GovernorsConferenceonAging



Let's celebrate those who helped shape our state. Whether you're attending the conference, nominating a centenarian, or just helping spread the word—you're making a difference in how Montana honors aging and community.

BASALT	LIMESTONE	RHYOLITE
CHERT	MARBLE	SANDSTONE
COAL	METAMORPHIC	SCHIST
COQUINA	OBSIDIAN	SEDIMENTARY
GABBRO	OOLITE	SHALE
GNEISS	PEGMATITE	SILTSTONE
GRANITE	PORPHYRY	SLATE
GYPNUM	PUMICE	SOAPSTONE
IGNEOUS	QUARTZITE	TUFF