Why Test for West Nile Virus (WNV)?

- Testing enables mosquito control and public health agencies to institute proper control measures to prevent further cases.
- Testing helps to differentiate WNV from other conditions such as enterovirus, other arboviral diseases.
- Testing helps providers offer anticipatory guidance — both WNV neuroinvasive disease and WN fever patients can have lingering symptoms. Knowing the underlying etiology is helpful for the patient and family members.

When, Where and How to Test:

When:

- Typically April through November for patients presenting with:
  - Encephalitis
  - Aseptic meningitis
  - Acute flaccid paralysis, atypical Guillain-Barré syndrome, transverse myelitis
  - Febrile illness (T > 38°C for > 7 days), other symptoms may include headache, rash, swollen lymph nodes, eye pain, nausea, or vomiting

Where:

- Many private, hospital and public health labs offer WNV testing; San Mateo County Public Health Laboratory does not currently offer testing.
- Positive results should be confirmed by the California Viral & Rickettsial Disease Laboratory. San Mateo County Public Health Laboratory can help route specimens to the state lab.

How:

- Lab diagnosis is generally accomplished by testing serum or cerebral spinal fluid
- Acute serum specimens (> 2 cc) and if lumbar puncture performed, 1-2 cc cerebrospinal fluid are required for testing

For more information:

- WNV: Keep It On Your Radar: cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Documents/KeepWNVonYourRadar.pps
- CA WNV website: westnile.ca.gov
- CDC: www.cdc.gov/westnile
- Anabel Tingin, MPH, Vector-Borne Diseases (650) 573-2346 atingin@smcgov.org