

**Is there a risk of getting infected with West Nile virus (WNV) if I eat turkey or another animal that has been infected with the virus?**

There is no evidence that people can become infected with WNV from eating infected meat. The small, theoretical risk of infection can be eliminated by proper handling and thorough cooking of meat before it is consumed. Several well-known and potentially serious food-borne illnesses can occur when turkey and other meats are improperly handled or undercooked. For more information about food safety, please see:

[www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/](http://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/).

**What is known about the risk of WNV infection from dried, uncooked meat (jerky)?**

There are no published studies that directly address this question. Most studies indicate that while mammals can become infected with WNV, they do not develop high concentrations of virus in their blood or tissues. Although it is unlikely that dried meat from mammals would have much virus present and probable that gastrointestinal digestion would further limit the possibility of infectiousness, there is insufficient evidence to determine whether dried meat presents a risk of WNV infection to humans or other animals.

If you have questions about this topic, it may be advisable to contact local wildlife authorities and/or health authorities to find out whether the area where the animal was harvested has WNV activity and whether animals of the species in question were affected.

**Additional Information:**

Is available at [www.ndhealth.gov/wnv](http://www.ndhealth.gov/wnv) or by calling the North Dakota Department of Health at 800.472.2180. Additional information about food safety is available at [www.ndhealth.gov/disease/GI](http://www.ndhealth.gov/disease/GI) or [www.cdc.gov/foodsafety](http://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety).

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