



Department of Health

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

JAMES V. McDONALD, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

JOHANNE E. MORNE, M.S.
Executive Deputy Commissioner

DATE: March 2, 2026

TO: Hospitals, Local Health Departments, Laboratories, Emergency Department Directors, Federally Qualified Health Centers, Infectious Disease Physicians, Infection Control Practitioners, Urgent Care, Primary Care Providers, and Veterinarians

FROM: New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) Bureau of Communicable Disease Control (BCDC)

HEALTH ADVISORY: New World Screwworm: Outbreak Moves into Northern Mexico

SUMMARY

- On January 20, 2026, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a health advisory about regarding New World screwworm (NWS) cases in animals in Mexico.
- NWS infestation occurs when NWS fly larvae infest the tissue or flesh of warm-blooded animals and humans.
- Since 2023, an outbreak of NWS infestations in people and animals has developed across Central America and Mexico.
- As of January 27, Central American countries and Mexico have reported more than 149,000 NWS cases in animals and more than 1,200 cases in people.
- During 2025, a travel-associated NWS myiasis was confirmed in a resident of Maryland who had returned from a country experiencing a NWS outbreak.
- As of 3/2/2026, the NWS fly has not been detected in the United States and risk to people remains low.
- Clinicians should consider the possibility of NWS infestation in persons who present with any of the following:
 - visible larvae or egg masses in a wound, ears, eyes, nose, mouth, or other body orifice (e.g., genitals).
 - destruction of healthy tissue.
 - sensation of movement, foul odor, bloody discharge, swelling, and pain.
 - recent travel to regions where NWS is present.
- **It is essential to remove, kill and properly dispose of all larvae and eggs from patients with suspected NWS.** This usually requires physical removal. Failure to kill and properly dispose of all larvae or eggs could result in the new introduction and spread of NWS in the local environment.
 - Place larvae and eggs in a leak-proof container containing a volume of liquid sufficient to fully submerge larvae and eggs.
 - 70% ethanol (preferred) will both kill and preserve the larvae and eggs for identification. Alternative liquids include 70% (or greater) isopropanol or, if no alcohol is available, 5%–10% formalin is acceptable.
- **Suspected human NWS infestation must be reported immediately to the local health department where the patient resides or the NYSDOH, as below.**
 - Outside of New York City, LHD contact information is available at: https://www.health.ny.gov/contact/contact_information. If unable to reach the LHD where the patient resides, contact the NYSDOH Bureau of

Communicable Disease Control at 518-473-4439 during business hours or at 866-881-2809 after hours.

- For NYC residents, report to the NYC Health Department's Provider Access Line at 866-692-3641.
- Additional information on specimen collection, packaging and submission for visual identification and confirmation will be provided when suspected cases are reported.
- Suspected NWS infestations in animals should immediately be reported to the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets at 518-457-3502.
- The CDC health advisory can be accessed at [New World Screwworm: Outbreak Moves into Northern Mexico](#).