



Image Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA APHIS). New World Screwworm Photo Gallery.

# NEW WORLD SCREWORM (NWS)



**New World Screwworm (NWS) is a serious disease caused by flies that lay their eggs in open wounds. When the eggs hatch, the larvae burrow and feed off of living flesh around the wound. This can lead to serious infections if not treated quickly. NWS affects both animals and humans, especially in warm, humid environments.**



Image Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). New World Screwworm Myiasis – Clinical Overview (2024)



## CLINICAL SIGNS

- Slow-healing wounds that get worse instead of better
- Foul-smelling discharge coming from the wound
- Visible larvae (maggots) moving in or around the wound
- Swelling, redness, and increased pain at the wound site

## ACTIONS TO TAKE

- Contact the State Veterinarian immediately with any suspected screwworm case(s)
- Isolate the affected animal(s) to prevent spread to others
- Do not move the animal(s) off the property until cleared by animal health authorities
- Work with a licensed veterinarian for proper treatment and documentation
- Record all recent animal movements or purchases to help with tracing
- If maggots or fly larvae are observed in wounds or mucosal areas and NWS is suspected, collect samples carefully and submit them for laboratory identification

## TREATMENT

- Immediately clean and disinfect wounds to remove dead tissue and larvae
- Manually remove visible larvae using forceps or veterinary-approved methods
- Apply topical insecticides or larvicides as recommended by a veterinarian
- Use antibiotics if secondary infection is present (under veterinary guidance)
- Isolate affected animals to prevent further spread

## PREVENTION

- Inspect animals regularly for wounds, especially around ears, tail, hooves, and genital areas
- Treat and cover any wounds promptly to prevent egg-laying by flies
- Apply fly repellents or pour-on insecticides during high-risk seasons
- Practice proper disposal of animal waste and carcasses to reduce fly breeding sites

**References:** [1] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). New World Screwworm Bench Aid (2024). Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/>  
[2] U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDAAPHIS). New World Screwworm (2025). Available at: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animals-and-livestock/livestock-poultry-disease/cattle/ticks-and-flies-that-carry-animal-diseases/new-world-screwworm> **APHIS**  
[3] U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDAAPHIS). New World Screwworm: Be Aware and Prepare (for Veterinarians) (April 2025). Available at: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/...> (link to veterinarian factsheet)  
[4] U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDAAPHIS). New World Screwworm Photo Gallery. Last modified July 10, 2025. Available at: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/cattle/ticks/screwworm/new-world-screwworm-photo-gallery> **APHIS**

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