

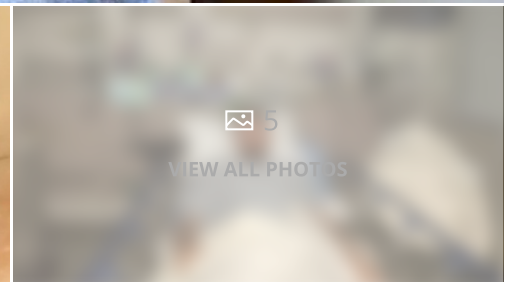
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# Shasta County man shows immense resilience after West Nile Virus leaves him paralyzed

by Anna Montemor

Thu, September 14th 2023, 4:05 PM PDT



In August the first case of the West Nile Virus was detected in Shasta County. KRCR spoke with the man whose life was flipped upside down from this mosquito bite.



REDI it, the first case of the West Nile Virus in Shasta County. KRCR spoke with the man whose life was flipped upside down from this mosquito bite.

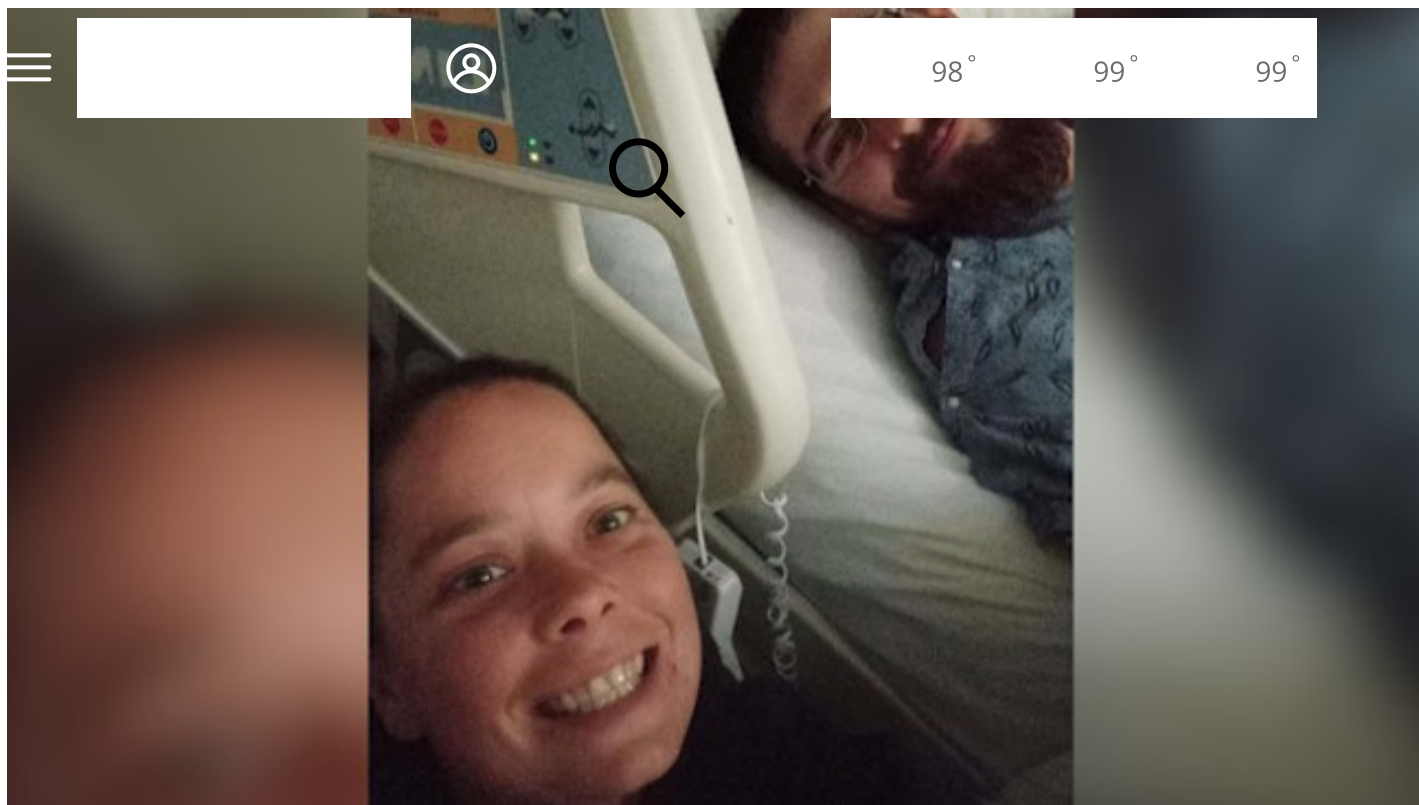


"In hours, I just went completely paralyzed," emotional words from Joe Raffa, who had the first case of WNV, which he says began as a mild flu.



*"In hours I just went completely paralyzed," emotional words from Joe Raffa, who had the first case of West Nile Virus which all started as a mild flu.*

"He woke up and said, 'I just don't feel good,'" explained Joe's wife, Jonae Raffa. As he continued to feel worse, they never believed what it would escalate to. "At one point, he told me he felt like his muscles were being eaten." Jonae continued, "He said I feel like my body is eating my muscles. When he woke up Thursday morning, he, literally, was paralyzed from the waist down."

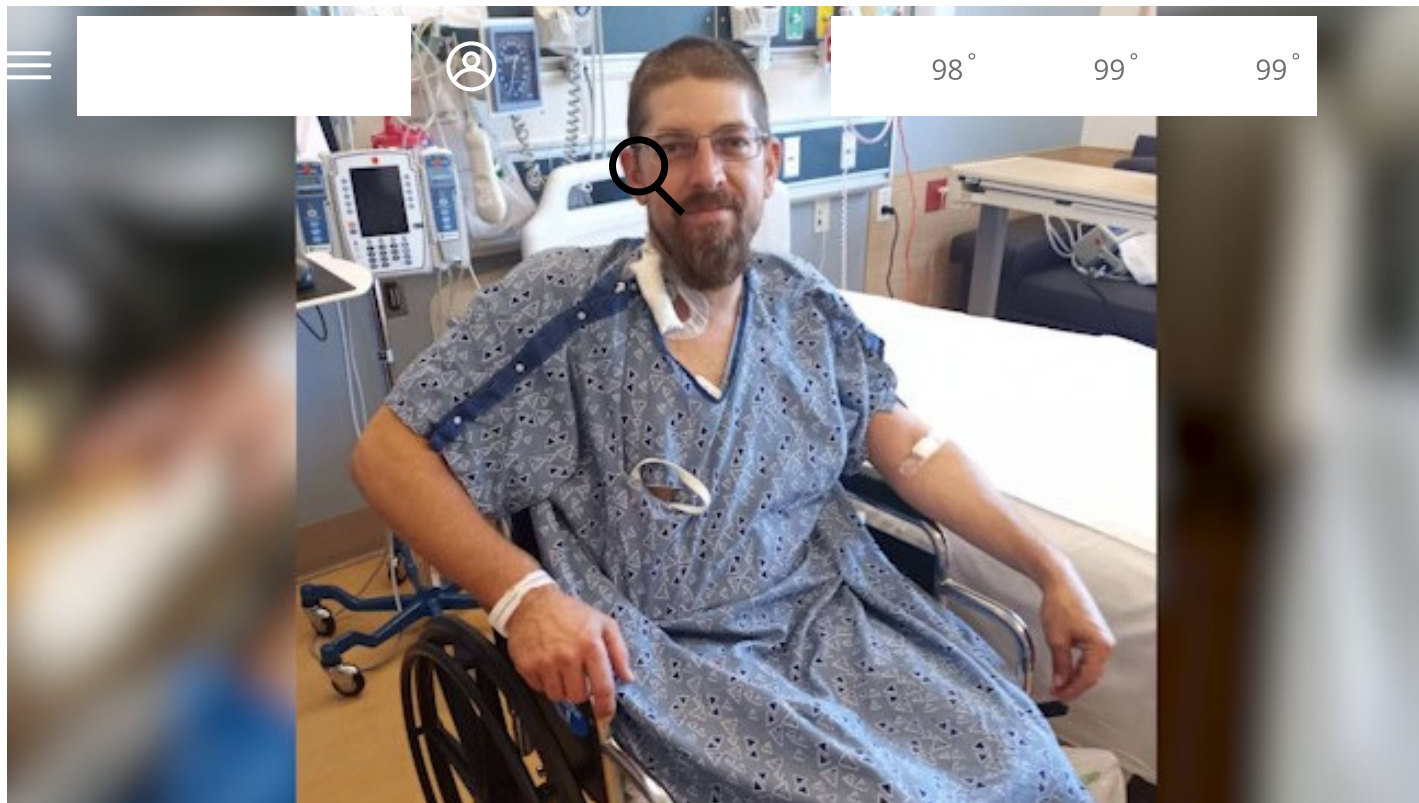


*"He woke up and said, " I just don't feel good," said Joe's wife, Jonae Raffa. As he continued to feel worse they never believed what it would escalate to. "At one point he told me he felt like his muscles were being eaten."*

***“ I'm in a wheelchair, here, you know," said Joe, "I never expected this and it's... it's very emotional. I can tell you that much.***

Joe has now been recovering and doing all he can to get back where he once was. "It's an incomplete paralysis, which means I am curable," said Joe. "I can get over this. I am going to be able to walk. You got to stay strong and you got to pick your head up can't let it go down."





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Joe is not the only one. According to the CDC, about one in five people who are infected develop a fever and other symptoms. About 1 out of 150 infected people develop a serious, sometimes fatal, illness.



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**“Don't take it as a joke,” said Joe. “Start using bug spray. I mean, I never thought a mosquito would take me down but, unfortunately, it did.”**

After everything, Joe will get to go home by the end of October and his resilience inspires many and is surrounded by support from his friends, family and wife. “My friends are bound and determined to get me walking.” Joe continued. “They told me they will tie their legs to my legs and we will walk around together.”



Joe's family has started a Go Fund Me for the medical bills and renovations needed to make his home more wheelchair accessible.

**“I'm going to go home. I am going to keep working hard. I'm not going to let anything take me down.” Joe continued, “I've got a strong brain, I have a strong mind, I'm going to go and I am not going to give up.**

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## Help the Raffa Family

\$6,015 raised of \$50,000 goal • 64 donations

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Joe's family has started a [GoFundMe](#) for the medical bills and renovations needed to make his home more wheelchair accessible. To find the link you can click [HERE](#).

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