

Fight the Bite!



They're back and with a vengeance! Mosquito season is here and we should make sure we know what steps we should take to protect ourselves and prepare our homes.

Protect yourself

Cover up. Wear light colors, long sleeves and long pants. Tuck pants into socks for extra protection. Consider mosquito netting if you're in a heavy mosquito area. Use bug repellent containing DEET and read directions carefully, especially for application to children.

Know the symptoms

It takes 3-15 days for symptoms to appear after being bitten by an infected mosquito. However, four out of five people show no symptoms. For most the symptoms are mild, but for a few people the reaction is pronounced. In rare cases the virus causes severe, life-threatening illness such as encephalitis.

Seek medical help

If you have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Muscle weakness
- Stiff neck
- Confusion
- Severe headache
- Sudden sensitivity to light

Extreme swelling or infection at the site of the mosquito bite is another reason to seek medical help.

Use repellent containing DEET

- Use federally registered insect repellants
- Apply sparingly on exposed skin or on top of clothing
- Do not use under clothing
- The repellent doesn't have to be applied heavily to be effective
- The concentration of DEET should be not greater than 30% for adults and no greater than 10% for children
- Use only when needed and follow label directions carefully - including restrictions for use on young children and maximum number of applications per day

How to choose a product containing DEET

Studies have shown that products with a lower concentration of DEET are just as effective as the high concentration products, but they remain effective for shorter periods of time:

- 30% provides protection for about 6 hours
- 15% provides protection for about 5 hours
- 10% provides protection for about 3 hours
- 5% provides protection for about 2 hours