

Keeping Mosquitoes & Ticks at Bay

Why we care

Everyone wants to enjoy the outdoors without being bothered by mosquitoes and ticks. Repellants are one way to keep insects from biting, but many contain DEET, which is toxic. Canada's health department has barred the sale of insect repellents for human use that contain more than 30% DEET, or more than 10% for children.

Simple, positive steps

Prevention

- Mosquitoes lay eggs on the surface of standing water. Empty containers such as flowerpot bottoms and bird baths at least once a week. Clean roof gutters regularly.
- To avoid ticks, wear long-sleeved shirts and pants, and tuck pants into socks.
- Inspect your body for ticks after hiking east of the Cascades or in Southern Oregon.

Natural repellants are the safest but are generally not as effective or long lasting as synthetics.

- Citronella oil repellants may need to be reapplied after 30 to 60 minutes.
- Products containing lemon eucalyptus oil have been shown to last longer. Look for Repel, Coleman, Natrapel, Cutter, or Murphy's products.

Synthetic repellants

- IR3535, PMD, and Picaridin are effective in products such as Avon's Skin So-Soft Bug Guard, Natrapel, Cutter Advanced, and some OFF! products.

DEET

- Toxicity experts recommend that DEET only be used at low doses. Do not use under clothing, on damaged skin, or on hands or near eyes and mouth of young children. Wash treated skin with soap and water.

Questions or feedback? Contact Jeanne Roy at jeanne@eecoschoolnetwork.org.