

Protect yourself from mosquito-borne disease

English

OFFICIAL

Warm and wet weather can mean more mosquito biting and breeding, including the ones that can carry diseases that make you sick.

Your only protection against mosquitoes and the diseases they can carry is to avoid mosquito bites.

Tips to protect yourself from mosquito bites

- Mosquitoes can bite through tight clothing. Cover up – wear long, loose, light-coloured clothing.
- Use mosquito repellents containing active ingredients like DEET or Picaridin. Apply evenly to all exposed skin and clothing.
- Limit outdoor activity if lots of mosquitoes are about.
- Remove stagnant water where mosquitoes can breed around your home or campsite.
- On holidays, make sure your accommodation is fitted with mosquito netting or screens.
- Use 'knockdown' fly spray, mosquito coils or plug-in repellent where you gather to sit or eat outdoors.
- Don't forget the kids – always check the insect repellent label. On babies, you might need to spray or rub repellent on their clothes instead of their skin. Avoid applying repellent to the hands of babies or young children.

For more ways to mosquito-proof your home and holiday, follow these simple checklists:

Mosquito-proof your home and yard

- Maintain fly screens on windows, doors, vents and chimneys.
- Use insect surface sprays inside and outside the house to kill mosquitoes.
- Use an effective mosquito repellent, containing either picaridin or diethyltoluamide (DEET) on all exposed skin.
- Remove stagnant water around the house so mosquitoes cannot breed.
- Change the water in pet drinking bowls, bird baths and vases at least once a week.
- Check and maintain rainwater tanks and water storage vessels to ensure screens are intact and limit mosquito entry.

Mosquito-proof your holiday checklist

- Before you go on holiday, plan to protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites.
- Be prepared. Learn about the risk of mosquitoes and local conditions at your holiday destination.
- Make sure your accommodation has fly screens fitted on all doors and windows.
- Pack mosquito repellent containing picaridin or diethyltoluamide (DEET).

- Apply a thin, even layer of repellent (as per label instructions) to any exposed skin and make sure you reapply regularly.
- Wear long, light-coloured, loose-fitting clothing when the mosquitoes are out.
- Make sure young children and babies have the right clothes and are wearing mosquito repellent appropriately.

About mosquito-borne diseases

Mosquitoes can carry diseases that can be passed on to humans through mosquito bites. These viruses are known as 'mosquito-borne diseases'.

In Victoria, the most common viruses transmitted by mosquitoes to humans are:

- Ross River virus
- Barmah Forest virus

Infections can also be caused by:

- Japanese encephalitis
- Murray Valley encephalitis
- West Nile virus
- Dengue virus

These viruses are rare but have the potential to cause severe disease.

Where to get help

- If you have any concerns about your health, see your GP (doctor) or call Nurse-on-Call Tel. 1300 60 60 24
- Department of Health, Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Unit. Tel. 1300 651 160
- Your local council

To receive this document in another format, phone [1300 651 160](tel:1300651160), using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or email [Communicable diseases section](mailto:infectious.diseases@health.vic.gov.au)<infectious.diseases@health.vic.gov.au>.

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