

# Fight the Bite!



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Is there a health topic you want to know more about? For more information about fitness, education and nutrition, or other health programs, contact Grace Keith, Health Educator, 850.926.0400 x. 215 or Grace\_Keith@doh.state.fl.us



Tropical Storm Debby left some little reminders for our county - flood waters, broken tree limbs and washed out roads. And mosquitoes - lots and lots of mosquitoes! These flying insects can cause painful bites for humans and animals, they spread diseases and can make everyday life miserable! Here are some ways to "fight the bite."

**Drain any outside container that can hold water.** Mosquitoes need stagnant water in order to lay their eggs. What most people don't realize is the surprising number of areas around their own house where mosquitoes can find the stagnant water they need. The main rule: If it can hold water for more than a few days, it can breed mosquitoes. Look in the following places for water and drain the water immediately. Check the containers after any amount of rain and empty again.



**Ornamental ponds or fish ponds** - if the pond is not active (no fish are in it), drain the water as soon as possible. If it is an active pond, call the Health Department and ask for mosquito "dunks" which will kill the mosquito larvae before they hatch. Dunks can also be purchased at a variety of garden shops or hardware stores. You may also purchase "mosquito fish" which eat mosquito larvae.

**Drainage ditches** that are holding water can also be treated with mosquito dunks.



**Old tires, buckets, flower pot saucers, wading pools, barrels, wheel barrows, and outdoor recycling bins** need to be cleared out of any leaves or debris, the standing water drained and the container turned upside down if possible to prevent further filling.

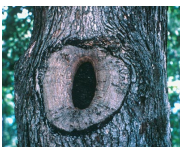


**Bird baths** need to have the water changed every few days to prevent eggs from being laid in the water.

**Outdoor pet drinking water** should be changed daily.

**Small boats, canoes and kayaks** should be emptied and turned upside down.

**Large above-ground or in-ground swimming pools** - ,if they in active use - simply maintain proper chlorine levels and continue running the filter as directed. If they not in active use, drain them or cover them tightly with a pool cover or tarp.



**Holes in tree limbs or trunks** need to be filled with sand. This absorbs the water and prevents mosquitoes from laying their eggs.

**Toys** that may hold water should be emptied and stored away or turned upside down.

**Call Mosquito Control at the Health Department at 926-0401 to request spray service or larvacide treatment.**





**Apply insect repellent properly.** Repellents that are currently available are either synthetic chemicals, such as DEET, or plant derived chemicals such as Citronella. Various formulations of these repellents are available that differ in the amount of active ingredient, which is the substance that actually repels the mosquito. These products are available as sprays, wipe-on's, sticks, foams, and lotions.

**Product Labels** - It is very important to read the label before using any mosquito repellent and remember the following:

- Both N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide and N,N-dimethylbenzamide are chemical names for DEET; the label may or may not have the word "DEET" on it
- There are different recommendations for frequency of application for different repellents; do not over apply
- Check the container for an EPA-approved label and registration number; never use a repellent that has not been approved for use by the EPA
- Make sure that the repellent label lists the insect that you need to repel; some repellents are not formulated for certain insects.

### How To Apply Mosquito Repellents

- **READ THE LABEL!!!** Apply according to the directions on the label. Do not use any repellent that has not been approved by the EPA. To find this information, you can visit the EPA's website [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov) or look for an EPA registration number on the label.
- As with all over-the-counter products, use common sense when applying. Watch for reactions, some people may be allergic to ingredients in the repellent.
- Do not apply to the mouth or eyes, cuts, wounds, or on sunburned or irritated skin.
- To apply to face, spray on hands first and then rub on face.
- Apply **ONLY** to the parts of the body that are exposed. Some repellents can be applied directly to clothing, but check the label first. Do not apply to skin that will be covered by clothing.
- Do not allow young children to apply repellents.
- Apply only as often as the label says. More is **NOT** better! If the repellent wears off earlier than expected, read the label to determine how often it is safe to re-apply.
- Keep in mind that some things may decrease the effectiveness of a repellent such as: activities that cause perspiration, high humidity, high temperature, rainfall, and swimming.

**Avoid going outdoors during dawn and dusk hours when mosquitoes are most active.**

**The Health Department is now offering a new class!** Basic First Aid will be offered for the first time on Thursday, July 12, 7-9 p.m. at the Health Department. The course is endorsed by the American Safety and Health Institute. Call 926-0400, ext. 215 for more information or to register for a class. The cost is \$25.00 per person.



### Hands-Only CPR, No Excuses

The next Hands-only CPR class is on Thursday, July 19, 7-9 p.m. at the Health Department. The course is endorsed by the American Safety and Health Institute. Call 926-0400, ext. 215 for more information or to register for a class. The cost is \$25.00 per person.

The Wakulla County Health Department now has a Service Provider Kiosk to help you find who and what you are looking for. The kiosk is located in the lobby of the Health Department, which is open Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

You can search sites such as 211Big Bend, Whole Child Leon, Florida Department of Children and Families and Wakulla County Coalition for Youth Resource Directory. Many providers are local and have sliding scales for those families in crisis. You can find all types of services from daily needs to emergency assistance. This service is also very helpful in the event that you have just moved into the area. The kiosk and electronic referral system were made possible through a grant sponsored by the Blue Foundation of Florida. There is no charge to use the kiosk.

