



INSECT BITES AND TICK-BORNE DISEASES

TOOLBOX TALK SERIES – HAZARDS

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As we spend more time outdoors, it's essential to address the potential risks of insect bites and tick-borne diseases. Insects like mosquitoes and ticks can transmit diseases such as West Nile virus, Lyme disease, or Zika virus. By understanding prevention strategies and taking appropriate precautions, we can minimize the risk of insect bites and tick-related illnesses. Let's discuss some key points on how to protect ourselves.

Key Points:

1. Understanding the Risks:

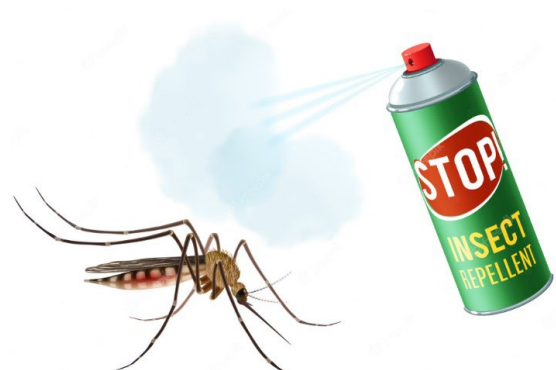
- Mosquitoes: They are most active during dawn and dusk and breed in standing water. They can transmit diseases like West Nile virus and dengue fever.
- Ticks: Found in grassy and wooded areas, ticks can transmit diseases such as Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, or tick-borne encephalitis.

2. Wear Protective Clothing:

- When outdoors, wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and closed-toe shoes to minimize exposed skin.
- Tuck pant legs into socks or boots to prevent ticks from crawling up the legs.
- Consider using permethrin-treated clothing for added protection against ticks.

3. Use Insect Repellents:

- Apply an EPA-approved insect repellent to exposed skin and clothing, following the manufacturer's instructions.





- Look for repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) for maximum effectiveness.
 - Reapply repellents as directed, especially after sweating or swimming.
4. Create a Tick-Free Zone:
- Keep grass and vegetation trimmed short to reduce tick habitat.
 - Clear leaves, brush, and other debris from work areas and trails.
 - Consider creating a barrier with wood chips or gravel between wooded areas and workspaces.
5. Perform Regular Tick Checks:
- Conduct a thorough tick check of your body after spending time outdoors.
 - Pay attention to hidden areas like underarms, behind the knees, scalp, and groin.
 - Promptly remove any ticks found using tweezers, grasping the tick close to the skin's surface and pulling upward with steady pressure.
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6. Educate and Communicate:
- Report any insect bites or tick sightings promptly.
 - Share resources and materials related to local disease risks and prevention measures.

Conclusion: Preventing insect bites and tick-related illnesses is essential for maintaining our health and well-being. By understanding the risks, wearing protective clothing, using repellents, creating tick-free zones, performing regular tick checks, and promoting education and communication, we can significantly reduce the chances of being bitten and infected. Let's take these preventive measures seriously and enjoy a safer outdoor working environment.