



Using an insect repellent can protect you from serious mosquito- and tick- borne diseases, such as Lyme disease and West Nile Virus.



FIGHT THE BITE!

What is Lyme Disease?

Lyme disease has become an increasingly common disease in Maine as a result of a growing deer tick population. Lyme disease is transmitted by an infected deer tick and can cause symptoms including, fever, headache, fatigue and a characteristic bulls-eye rash. If caught early, Lyme disease can be successfully treated with antibiotics. If it is left untreated or undiagnosed, the infection can spread to the joints, heart, and nervous system. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has put together an informative website on Lyme disease, which you can access at www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/lyme/



What is West Nile?

West Nile Virus is often spread to humans from the bite of an infected mosquito. Bites may result in illnesses that range from mild flu-like conditions to severe and sometimes life-threatening diseases. Symptoms of West Nile Virus may include: headache, fever, body aches, swollen lymph nodes, skin rash on body, stiff neck, disorientation, tremors, convulsions, and muscle weakness. Outdoor workers should be aware of steps they can take to protect themselves from exposure to West Nile. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has created a brochure that discusses West Nile Virus in more detail; this can be seen at www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/westnile/

Protect Yourself!

Using the right insect repellent and other preventative actions can discourage ticks, mosquitoes, and other biting insects from landing on you. Repellents are available to protect you from insects and give you the length of protection you need, based on your planned activity. Want to know more about what insect repellent will work best for you and your unique situation? The Environmental Protection Agency has created an interactive website to help you choose a repellent that is right for you, visit <http://cfpub.epa.gov/oppref/insect/index.cfm>

There are many people who are nervous about the chemicals found in pesticides and insect repellents and rightly so! Everyone should be aware of the health and safety precautions when using any form of pesticide, for this reason, the Environmental Protection Agency has created a clearinghouse of fact sheets that contain general and chemical-specific information on pesticides. You can access these fact sheets at www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets

Looking for someone to come do the work for you? The Maine Board of Pesticide Control keeps an up-to-date list of licensed companies offering tick and mosquito control services. So when the biting gets to be too much, look one of these companies up to help you out! A complete list can be found at www.maine.gov/agriculture/pesticides/public/mosquito_control_list.htm



Wellness Works is the Health Education and Promotion Program of the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust.
1-800-852-8300
www.mmeht.org