



# Mosquito Repellents

By Dr. Tina Boylston

## Avoidance:

Mosquitoes are most active during the hours of dawn and dusk. Avoid being outside during these peak feeding times. If you cannot avoid being out, wear long sleeves and pants to limit the amount of skin exposed to bites. Use mosquito netting over infant carriers as a barrier.

## Prevention:

Mosquitoes lay eggs in as little as ¼" of water. The most important intervention you can make in eliminating mosquitoes from your property is to eliminate their breeding ground. Here are some commonly overlooked areas:

- children's toys
- plastic or canvas tarps, pool covers
- plant trays/saucers
- pet food/dishes
- old tires
- bird baths
- clogged rain gutters
- livestock water troughs
- garden hoses, sprinklers
- garbage can lids

## Application:

- 1) You should apply just enough repellent to cover only your child's exposed skin. Never apply under clothing, diapers, or swimwear.
- 2) Do not apply repellent around your child's mouth or on his hands. This decreases the amount they might inadvertently ingest. (note: If your infant chews on his feet, avoid applying repellent there as well.)
- 3) Do not apply over cuts, abrasions or irritated skin.
- 4) Do not use aerosolized products. This limits the amount inhaled.
- 5) Do not apply repellent in a closed/confined area. Apply repellent only in a well-ventilated/open location.



- 6) To apply repellent, apply into your hand first then apply by lightly patting it onto your child's exposed skin while avoiding the areas mentioned above. A light application of repellent works just as well as a heavy application.
- 7) You may lightly apply repellent to the OUTSIDE of your child's clothes as well.
- 8) Do not use products that contain both sunscreen and repellent. You will need to reapply sunscreen, but you can only apply repellent once a day no matter what strength repellent or age of your child.
- 9) Select a repellent that is approved for your age child and amount of time you plan to spend outdoors. See table below.
- 10) ONLY one application of any repellent per day. This applies to all repellents and their varying strengths. This also applies to any age of child/adult.
- 11) As soon as you are done with your outdoor activity, wash your child immediately with soap and water to remove all repellent. Also, if repellent was applied to your child's clothing and/or shoes make sure you wash those as well prior to wearing again.

### Products:

- 1) Select a product appropriate for your child's age that supplies the appropriate length of protection with the lowest strength repellent possible. Remember only 1 application per day no matter which repellent or strength you use.
- 2) Even though DEET is approved down to 2 months of age, it is the author's opinion that the use of repellent should be avoided if at all possible in this young age group. Birthday parties, trips to the coast, camping trips etc are optional activities. Please consider the risk of using repellent versus the benefit gained from your outdoor activity. I am NOT saying do not use repellents and accept a few bites. What I am saying is give up the outdoor activity and avoid bites and repellent all together in young infants.



Active Ingredient	Strength	Trade Names	Recommended age	Hours of Protection
DEET	10%	Off	2 months and up	2 hours
DEET	30%	Off	2 months and up	5 hours
Picaridin	5-10%	Cutter	3 years and up	2 hours
Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus	30%		3 years and up	2 hours

Resources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

Healthy Children/American Academy of Pediatrics: [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)