

## Warm Weather Tips—Preventing West Nile Virus

Summer is also the beginning of mosquito season, and that means the return of West Nile Virus. There are a few simple steps that you can take to greatly reduce your risk of contracting the virus.

- Use mosquito repellent containing DEET. The DEET percentage indicates how long you will be protected from mosquitoes. A higher percentage of DEET in a repellent does not mean that your protection is better—just that it will last longer. According to the CDC, DEET concentrations higher than 50% do not increase the length of protection.
- Remember to spray clothing with repellents containing permethrin or DEET since mosquitoes can bite through clothing. Do not apply repellents containing permethrin directly to exposed skin.

**Note:** Please follow manufacturer's instructions. Do not use on infants or pregnant women.

- Wear long sleeves/pants and limit the time you spend out doors.
- Place mosquito netting over infant carriers when you are outdoors with infants.
- Make sure all screens in your home are tight fitting and in good repair.

- Consider staying indoors at dawn, dusk, and in the early evening, which are peak mosquito biting times.

Mosquitoes can breed in any puddle or standing water that remains more than four days. To help cut down on mosquitoes, you will also need to eliminate any standing water by:

- Disposing of tin cans, old tires, bottles, ceramic pots and other containers that might contain standing water.
- Clean out clogged gutters.
- Drain any sagging swimming pool covers.
- Change birdbath water at least twice weekly.
- Clean and Chlorinate swimming pools and hot tubs--if not in use make sure they have a tight fitting cover.
- Empty pet watering dishes daily.
- Eliminate weeds, tall grass and other mosquito breeding places
- Use larvicide where standing water cannot be removed or fill holes.

For more information, please visit the Georgia Division of Public Health at <http://health.state.ga.us/epi/vbd/mosquito.asp>.