



Avoid Bug Bites

Bugs (including mosquitoes, ticks, and some flies) can spread a number of diseases. Many of these diseases cannot be prevented with a vaccine or medicine. You can reduce your risk by taking steps to prevent bug bites.



What type of insect repellent should I use?

- **FOR PROTECTION AGAINST TICKS AND MOSQUITOES:** Use a repellent that contains 20% or more DEET for protection that lasts up to several hours. Products containing DEET include Off!, Cutter, Sawyer, and Ultrathon.
- **FOR PROTECTION AGAINST MOSQUITOES ONLY:** Products with one of the following active ingredients can also help prevent mosquito bites. Higher percentages of active ingredient provide longer protection.
 - **DEET**
 - **Picaridin** (also known as KBR 3023, Bayrepel, and icaridin. Products containing picaridin include Cutter Advanced, Skin So Soft Bug Guard Plus, and Autan [outside the US])
 - **Oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE)** or **PMD** (Products containing OLE include Repel and Off! Botanicals)
 - **IR3535** (Products containing IR3535 include Skin So Soft Bug Guard Plus Expedition and SkinSmart)
- Always follow product directions and reapply as directed.
 - If you are also using sunscreen, apply sunscreen first and insect repellent second.
 - Follow package directions when applying repellent on children. Avoid applying repellent to their hands, eyes, and mouth.
- Consider using permethrin-treated clothing and gear (such as boots, pants, socks, and tents). You can buy pre-treated clothing and gear or treat them yourself.
 - Treated clothing remains protective after multiple washings. See the product information to find out how long the protection will last.
 - If treating items yourself, follow the product instructions carefully.
 - **DO NOT** use permethrin directly on skin.

What other steps should I take to prevent bug bites?

- **Prevent mosquito bites.**
 - Cover exposed skin by wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and hats.
 - Stay and sleep in screened or air-conditioned rooms.
 - Use a bed net if the area where you are sleeping is exposed to the outdoors.
- **Prevent tick bites.**
 - Cover exposed skin by wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and hats.
 - Tuck in shirts, tuck pants into socks, and wear closed shoes instead of sandals to prevent bites.
 - Avoid wooded and brushy areas with high grass, brush, and leaves. Walk in the center of hiking trails.



(continued on next page)



- **Prevent tsetse fly bites.**

- The tsetse fly lives in sub-Saharan Africa and can spread African sleeping sickness (African trypanosomiasis).
- Cover exposed skin by wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and hats.
 - Clothing fabric should be at least medium weight because the tsetse fly can bite through thin fabric.
- Wear neutral-colored clothing. The tsetse fly is attracted to bright colors, very dark colors, metallic fabric, and the color blue.
- Avoid bushes during the day, when the tsetse fly is less active. It rests in bushes and will bite if disturbed.
- Inspect vehicles for tsetse flies before entering. The flies are attracted to moving vehicles.

What should I do if I am bitten by bugs?

- **If you are bitten by mosquitoes:**

- Avoid scratching mosquito bites.
- Apply hydrocortisone cream or calamine lotion to reduce itching.

- **Find and remove ticks from your body.**

- Bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors.
- Check your entire body (under your arms, in and around your ears, in your belly button, behind your knees, between your legs, around your waist, and especially in your hair). Use a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body.
 - Be sure to remove ticks properly.
 - Parents should check their children for ticks.
- Check your pets and belongings. Ticks can be on outdoor equipment and clothes.

What can I do to avoid bed bugs?

Although bed bugs do not carry disease, they are an annoyance. Take the following precautions to avoid them:

- Inspect your accommodations for bed bugs on mattresses, box springs, bedding, and furniture.
- Keep suitcases closed when they are not in use and try to keep them off the floor.
- Keep clothes in your suitcase when you are not wearing them.
- Inspect clothes before putting them back in your suitcase.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel
- Travel Health Online: www.tripprep.com