

Mosquitoes

Where do mosquitoes breed?

A mosquito's lifecycle has four stages – egg, larva, pupa and adult. All mosquitoes need water to breed and spend their larval and pupal stages in water. This is why it is important to prevent stagnant water from standing around your home.

How long does it take for mosquitoes to hatch after a flood?

Flood-water mosquitoes, which include some species of the *Psorophora*, *Ochlerotatus* and *Aedes* genera, lay eggs above the waterline in ditches, ponds, tanks and other places where water collects. The eggs can remain in dry conditions for several months. After floods or heavy rains when the water level rises, the eggs hatch and in a few days produce swarms of aggressive and hungry mosquitoes. Another wave of mosquitoes occurs later – typically 10 to 14 days after the rains stop. These mosquitoes are a big nuisance but rarely cause illnesses.

What about other types of mosquitoes?

Other kinds of mosquitoes, including the *Culex* genus, lay eggs on the standing water left by flooding or heavy rains. These mosquitoes may transmit viruses such as West Nile virus, St. Louis encephalitis or dengue fever.

Where are adult mosquitoes found?

Adult flying mosquitoes frequently rest in grass, shrubbery or other foliage.

How can mosquitoes be controlled around the home?

Get rid of standing water in which mosquitoes can breed. If there are any places around your home where water collects such as water-holding containers, house cooler drains and ponds, you may be raising mosquitoes.

What specific steps can people take to control mosquitoes outside a home?

Take the following steps to help cut down on the mosquito population:

- Empty or get rid of cans, buckets, bottles, old tires, empty pots, plant saucers and other containers that hold water.
- Keep gutters clear of debris and standing water. Remove standing water around structures and from flat roofs.
- Change water in pet dishes at least once a day. Change water in wading pools and bird baths several times a week.
- Fill in low areas in the yard and holes in trees that catch water.
- Maintain your backyard pool or hot tub and be sure someone takes care of it if you are out of town.
- Stock ornamental ponds with fish that eat mosquitoes.
- Cover trash containers so they will not collect water.

- Water lawns and gardens carefully so water does not stand for several days.
- Repair any leaking plumbing and outside faucets.
- Screen rain barrels and openings to water tanks or cisterns.
- Keep drains and ditches clear of weeds and trash so water will not collect.

How can people keep mosquitoes out of the house?

Be sure door, porch and window screens are in good condition. Don't leave doors standing open to let mosquitoes in the house.

How can people protect themselves from mosquito bites?

Cover as much skin as possible to reduce exposure to mosquito bites and use a recom-

mended repellent on exposed skin every time you are outdoors. Mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing, so spray clothes with repellent containing permethrin for extra protection. Also, limit the amount of time you spend outdoors from dusk to dawn. These are times when those mosquitoes likely to carry infections are most active.

What do people need to look for in an insect repellent?

Use insect repellents that contain DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR3535. Always follow label directions. Store insect repellent at the front and back doors of your home and apply when you go outside. Keep extra repellent in outdoor areas such as patios and decks.