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## TAKE PRECAUTIONS TO AVOID MOSQUITO BORNE ILLNESSES



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**Milton, FL** - Mosquitoes can cause more than annoying, itching bites. They can also carry illnesses like West Nile Virus, Eastern Equine Encephalitis, Saint Louis Encephalitis, and Dengue Fever. While Santa Rosa County has had no cases of mosquito borne illnesses to date, the Florida Department of Health in Santa Rosa County would like to remind residents and visitors about the importance of preventing mosquito bites to protect themselves from mosquito-borne illnesses.

Everyone should take precautions to eliminate areas where mosquitoes may breed and reduce the possibility of being bitten by mosquitoes by remembering to “Drain and Cover”.

### **DRAIN standing water to stop mosquitoes from multiplying.**

- Drain water from garbage cans, house gutters, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flower pots or any other containers where sprinkler or rain water has collected.
- Discard old tires, drums, bottles, cans, pots and pans, broken appliances and other items that are not being used.
- Empty and clean pets’ water bowls daily and bird baths at least once a week.
- Protect boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that don’t accumulate water.
- Maintain swimming pools in good condition and appropriately chlorinated. Empty plastic swimming pools when not in use.

### **COVER skin with clothing or repellent.**

- CLOTHING- Wear shoes, socks, long pants and long sleeves. This type of protection may be necessary for people who must work in areas where mosquitoes are present.
- REPELLENT- Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing.
- Always use repellents according to the label. Repellents with DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and IR3535 are effective.
- Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than 2 months old.

### **Tips on Repellent Use**

- Always read label directions carefully for the approved usage before you apply repellent. Some repellents are not suitable for children.
- Products with concentrations of up to 30 percent DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide) are generally recommended. Other US Environmental Protection

Agency- approved repellents contain picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535. These products are generally available at local pharmacies. Look for active ingredients to be listed on the product label.

- Apply insect repellent to exposed skin or onto clothing. Do not apply under clothing.
- In protecting children, read label instructions to be sure the repellent is age appropriate. According to the CDC, mosquito repellents containing oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under the age of three years. DEET is not recommended on children younger than two months old.
- Avoid applying repellents to the hands of children. Adults should apply repellent first to their own hands and then transfer it to the child's skin and clothing.
- If additional protection is necessary, apply a permethrin repellent directly to your clothing. Again, always follow the manufacturer's directions.
- Repair broken screening on windows, doors, porches, and patios.
- To determine which repellent is right for you, consider using the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's search tool for skin-applied repellent products: <http://cfpub.epa.gov/oppref/insect/#searchform>.

For more information, visit the Florida Department of Health at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/videos/drain-and-cover.html>.

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