

# **Prevention Guidelines for Mosquito and Tick Diseases**

## *NH Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services*

### **1. Eliminate habitat and breeding locations.**

#### Mosquitoes

- Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Remove outdoor items that hold water (old tires, cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots).
- Drill holes in the bottom of outdoor recycling containers, clean roof gutters and ensure proper drainage.
- If not in use, empty and/or cover swimming pools, wading pools and hot tubs.
- Turn over wheelbarrows and change water in birdbaths at least twice weekly.

#### Ticks

- Minimizing areas where hosts for the ticks, such as rodents and deer, can congregate to eat, sleep or feed.

### **2. Be aware of where mosquitoes and ticks live.**

- Weeds, tall grass, and bushes provide an outdoor home for mosquitoes and ticks alike.
- Make sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace all screens in your home that have tears or holes.
- Resting mosquitoes can often be flushed from indoor resting sites by using sweeping motions under beds, behind bedside tables etc. and once in flight, exterminated prior to sleeping at night.
- Avoid tick-infested areas. If in tick-infested areas, walk in the center of trails to avoid contact with overgrown grass, brush, and leaf litter at trail edges.

### **3. Protect yourself from bites.**

- When outside, wear protective clothing such as socks, long-sleeved shirts, and long pants (preferably tucked in socks). Light-colored clothing helps you spot ticks.
- Consider avoiding outdoor activities in the early morning and evening, when mosquitoes are most likely to be biting.
- Wear insect repellents, such as one containing 30% or less DEET (N,N-diethyl-methyl-meta-toluamide), Picaridin, para-menthane-diol, IR3535, or 2-undecanone or oil of lemon eucalyptus. Treat clothing with permethrin, which is odorless when dry.
- Vitamin B, ultrasonic devices, incense, and bug zappers have not been shown to be effective in preventing mosquito bites.
- Shower as soon as possible after spending time outdoors.
- Check for ticks daily on yourself, your children, and your pets. Ticks can hide under the armpits, behind the knees, in the hair, and in the groin.
- Wash and dry clothing after being outdoors. Tumble clothes in a dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks on dry clothing. If the clothes are damp, additional time may be needed.
- Early removal of ticks can reduce the risk of infection. Inspect all body surfaces carefully and remove attached ticks with tweezers. Monitor your health closely after a tick bite and be alert for symptoms of illness. Contact your physician to discuss testing and treatment.

*For more information on mosquito-borne diseases, visit the DHHS Website at [www.dhhs.nh.gov](http://www.dhhs.nh.gov).*