



DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide)

DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) is the active ingredient experts consider most effective for repelling mosquitoes and other biting insects.

Use products containing DEET with caution. They have been associated with some health problems of their own, including skin reactions (rash, swelling and itching), eye irritation; and, less frequently, slurred speech, confusion and seizures.

In 1998, after a comprehensive review of the health and safety data available on DEET, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Pesticide Programs issued new labeling requirements to ensure the safe use of DEET-containing insect repellents.

Here are EPA's suggestions for safe use of DEET products:

- Store DEET-containing products out of reach of children.
- Read and follow all directions and precautions on the product label before using.
- Do not apply over cuts, wounds, or irritated skin.
- Do not apply to hands or near eyes and mouths of young children. (*According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, repellents used on children should contain no more than 10 percent DEET.*)
- Do not allow young children to apply the product themselves.
- Use just enough repellent to cover exposed skin and/or clothing.
- Do not use under clothing.
- To apply to face, spray on hands first and then rub on face. Do not spray directly onto face.
- Use sparingly; avoid over-application.
- After returning indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water.
- Wash treated clothing before wearing it again.
- Do not apply DEET-containing products in enclosed areas.

If you believe you or a child is having an adverse reaction to an insect repellent containing DEET, wash the treated area immediately and contact your health care provider or the New Hampshire Poison Control Center: **1-800-562-8236**. For more information about DEET or other pesticides, call the National Pesticide Telecommunications Network's toll-free hotline, **1-800-858-7378**, Monday through Friday, 9:30 AM - 7:30 PM.

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