



PROTECTING AGAINST INSECT BITES

Protection against insect bites is the first line of defence against vector-borne diseases.

How to Avoid Insect Bites

- Avoid insect habitat areas (such as stagnant water, wetlands, and lakes).
- Wear loose-fitting, long-sleeved clothing and long trousers. Avoid bright or dark colours that could attract insects.
- Avoid using perfumed cosmetic products (such as colognes, creams, or deodorants).
- Sleep in air-conditioned rooms or rooms with mosquito-proof windows.
- Place mosquito nets around the bed at night, especially during early childhood. Nets should have a mesh size of less than 1.5 mm, and be impregnated with 13.3% Permethrin. Check for holes and tuck them under the mattress carefully. They can be re-impregnated with synthetic Pyrethrin sprays.
- Frequent indoor spraying with insecticides, using special electrical appliances impregnated with synthetic pyrethrins or burning anti-mosquito coils with Pyrethrin.
- **Mosquito repellents:** are applied to exposed skin or clothing. Follow the manufacturer's instructions and don't exceed the recommended doses.

Several international organisations recommend repellents containing DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide) as an active ingredient (such as *Relec extra fuerte* (extra-strength) or *Goibi Xtreme*). At 40% concentrations, the effect lasts on average 6-8 hours (but it varies with aspects such as ambient temperature, perspiration, and water exposure).

Precautions for use

- Apply the repellent only on healthy exposed skin, not on cuts, wounds or irritated skin, nor on skin covered by clothing.
- Apply sunscreen first and the repellent twenty minutes later.
- Always apply the spray in well-ventilated areas.
- Don't apply it to children's hands (they could get it in their mouth and eyes). Don't allow children under ten to apply it unsupervised.
- These products are toxic, so always wash your hands after each application and keep them out of the reach of children.