

IT'S TIME TO FIGHT THE BITE
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It has finally hit a warm streak in North Carolina. With warm weather and afternoon showers come pests like mosquitoes and ticks. For many, the pesky bugs are just a nuisance. However, they really are much more. They actually carry diseases that can cause sickness, paralysis and even death.



North Carolina has led the nation in cases of Rocky Mountain Spotted fever – a disease transmitted to people by ticks. Mosquitoes can transmit diseases like La Crosse virus, Eastern equine encephalitis and West Nile virus.

This is the time to take action to prevent mosquitoes and ticks from breeding in your backyards. Simple measures like keeping grass short, removing any containers that hold water which can serve as mosquito breeding grounds and removing plants that attract wild animals like deer and rodents, which carry ticks.

It is also important to protect yourself and your family when you're outside enjoying North Carolina's warm weather. Insect repellent is useful, particularly against mosquitoes. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend several repellents against mosquitoes – DEET, picaridin and oil of lemon eucalyptus. Repellents containing permethrin provide excellent protection against ticks but may only be used on clothing. Consumers should look for products that contain the CDC-recommended ingredients, and should read and follow all label instructions.

Exposure to both mosquitoes and ticks can be limited by wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants and socks. People should also check themselves and their families for ticks when they are in tick-prone areas.

For additional information on mosquitoes and ticks, visit the following Web sites:

Pest Management: www.deh.enr.state.nc.us/phpm

Arboviruses: www.epi.state.nc.us/epi/arbovirus

Ticks: www.epi.state.nc.us/epi/tick

The CDC "Fight the Bite!" page

American Mosquito Information pages

Mosquito Information

Mosquito Biology

Control of Mosquitos

- Traps

Mistaken Identities

Life Cycle