



INYO COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

PUBLIC HEALTH BRIEF

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Fight The Bite! Avoid Mosquito Bites to Avoid Infection

Mosquito populations are higher in many areas of the state this year due to above-average precipitation and runoff. Aside from the annoyance of itchy bites, mosquitoes can sometimes carry diseases that can be passed to humans and other animals.

West Nile Virus, a disease that can be transmitted by some mosquitoes found in California, has not been identified in mosquito samples in Inyo County yet this year. The virus has been detected in other parts of California, including Southern California, the Central Valley, and the Bay Area. So far this season, West Nile activity is within expected levels statewide.

The types of mosquitoes that transmit the Zika virus are not found in Inyo County. While they have been detected in other parts of California, no local transmissions of mosquito-borne Zika virus infections have happened in California to date. People who travel to areas where Zika virus is found (including, but not limited to: Mexico, some Central and South American countries, the Bahamas, and other tropical countries and territories) are encouraged to review current travel guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at <https://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/index.html>.

Taking steps to prevent mosquito bites can help reduce your chance of getting a mosquito-borne illness. To protect yourself and children, follow these guidelines established by the CDC:

Use Insect Repellent

- Choose a repellent that contains DEET, Picaridin, IR3535, Oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) or para-methane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone.
- When used as directed, and reapplied according to the directions, these EPA-registered insect repellents are proven safe and effective, even for pregnant and breastfeeding women.
- When putting insect repellent on children, spray it into your hands and apply to the child's face. Do not apply repellent to babies under the age of 2 months. Do not use products with oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) or para-methane-diol (PMD) on children under 3 years old.

Wear Long-Sleeved Shirts and Long Pants

- Clothing and gear (such as tents) treated with permethrin can provide additional protection. If you are applying permethrin yourself, follow product directions and do not use permethrin products directly on skin.
- Protect children by dressing them in clothing that covers their arms and legs. Cover baby's crib, stroller, and baby carrier with mosquito netting.

Avoid Being Outdoors When Mosquitos are Most Active

- Most types of mosquitos are more active at dawn and dusk. If you must be outdoors during early morning or evening hours, wear insect repellent and protective clothing.

Control Mosquitos at Your Home

- Mosquitos breed in standing water. Limit mosquito breeding sites on your property by dumping out or covering items that hold water, such as buckets, planters, toys, pools, birdbaths, and old tires.
- Use screens on windows and doors to prevent mosquitos from coming inside. Use air conditioning, if available, and keep doors closed. Consider using mosquito nets on beds if air conditioned or screened rooms are not available, or if you are sleeping outside.

More information can be found on the following websites:

- **CDC Mosquito Bite Prevention**
https://www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/pdfs/fs_mosquito_bite_prevention_us.pdf
- **CA Department of Public Health's Mosquitoes and Mosquito-Borne Illnesses**
<https://archive.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/MosquitoBorneDiseases.aspx>
- **CA West Nile Virus Website**
<http://www.westnile.ca.gov/>
- **CDC Zika Virus Information**
<https://www.cdc.gov/zika/index.html>