



Press Release

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CDC Adopts New Repellent Guidance for Upcoming Mosquito Season

Americans have more options than ever to use in protecting themselves from mosquito bites. Today, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released new guidance about effective mosquito repellents available in the United States. The updated guidance includes addition of two active ingredients – picaridin and oil of lemon eucalyptus – which have been shown to offer long-lasting protection against mosquito bites. Repellents containing DEET continue to be a highly effective repellent option and are also included in the CDC guidelines.

Picaridin, also known as KBR 3023, is an ingredient found in many mosquito repellents used in Europe, Australia, Latin America and Asia for some time. Evidence indicates that it works very well, often comparable with DEET products of similar concentration. One product, containing 7 percent picaridin, is being distributed in the United States for the first time this year. The other repellent is oil of lemon eucalyptus (also known as p-menthane 3,8-diol or PMD), a plant-based mosquito repellent that provided protection time similar to low concentration DEET products in two recent studies. It is available in a variety of formulations throughout the United States.

“We’re very excited that the number of options people have to protect themselves from mosquitoes and therefore West Nile Virus has increased,” said CDC Director Julie L. Gerberding. “Products containing DEET, picaridin and oil of lemon eucalyptus are all excellent choices. The important thing is that they remember to protect themselves from mosquito bites when they’re going to be outside. We want people to enjoy their spring and summer free of West Nile Virus.”

Mosquito season has already begun in some parts of the country. With mosquitoes comes the risk of West Nile Virus infection and other infections spread by mosquitoes. Just one bite can lead to an infection that could cause serious illness or even death. While people over 50 are more likely to become seriously ill if infected with WNV, people of any age can become mildly to seriously ill. Most people who contract West Nile Virus do not show any symptoms. However, about 20 percent of people experience symptoms such as fever, headache, nausea and vomiting and an estimated 1 in 150 people infected with WNV will develop severe illness. The severe symptoms can include high fever, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss and paralysis.

DEET, picaridin and oil of lemon eucalyptus are all registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which regulates these products. Repellents registered with EPA have been evaluated for both safety and efficacy when used according to label instructions.

CDC recommends that people use repellent anytime they go outside, especially during prime mosquito biting hours, between dusk and dawn. People should follow the label instructions, and if they start getting bitten re-apply repellent.

CDC works with state and local health departments, federal and other government agencies, as well as private industry, to prepare for and prevent new cases of West Nile virus infection. CDC coordinates ArboNet, a nation-wide electronic database that gathers information about West Nile virus in humans and animals, in order to guide prevention and response activities. To learn more about how to protect yourself and your family from West Nile Virus, please visit www.cdc.gov/westnile. More

information on the guidance is available at
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/RepellentUpdates.htm>.

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