

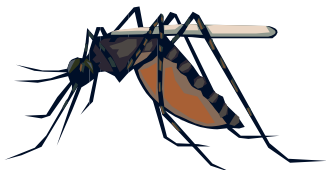


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**Ahh! Beautiful summertime – warm weather, sunny skies, and outdoor activities.**

Have you thought about how you will protect your skin and your children's skin? Here we will give you tips on natural mosquito bite prevention, what to look for in a sunscreen, as well as teach you how to do a self-skin examination.



**Mosquito bite Prevention - the DEET-free way!**

Mosquitoes are not only a nuisance – their bites can cause serious complications, including the transmission of diseases such as malaria, yellow fever and West Nile (WN) virus to humans and animals. Mosquitoes belong to the Dipterae order, and while there are over 2500 different species of mosquitoes throughout the world, only about 72 species are found in Canada. Ten of these species have been found to carry WN, but not all of these species feed on humans. While there are many ways to deter mosquitoes from biting you, some are more toxic than others.

**What is Wrong with DEET Anyway?**

DEET stands for N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide. It is a multipurpose insect repellent that is used directly on the skin to repel insects, rather than kill them. DEET is a neurotoxin in humans, and many animals. Studies have shown that after absorption through the skin, it is delivered to all organs including the brain and fetus (in pregnant women). It is passed through breastmilk, and can also be found in urine.

*Do not use products containing DEET while pregnant or nursing, it can harm your baby.*

**Natural Repellents**

- **Citronella** and **Lavender**. Registered products containing citronella or lavender protect people against mosquito bites for anywhere from 30 minutes to two hours. *Citronella* oil is a natural insect repellent that should be rubbed on the skin, and is safe for children over two years of age and pregnant women. Keep away from eyes.
- **Skin-So-Soft** by Avon has been shown to repel mosquitoes. It contains citronella oil (0.10% derived from *Cymbopogon winteratus* and appears to have few side effects. It comes in lotion, gel, spray and wipes for use on clothing and skin.
- **Neem oil**: This natural product from an Indian tree was shown to provide protection from mosquitoes for up to 12 hours in one study. Azadirachtin, from the seeds, was found to both repel and disrupt the growth and reproduction of many destructive insect species. Unlike many synthetic insecticides, low doses were found to have little or no toxicity. Both neem oil and azadirachtin are effective and safe.
- **Supplement**: internal use of garlic and vitamin B1 (thiamine) supplements are effective, as they give off an unfavourable scent to the insect.

B-complex – 100 mg per day from April to October. Use ½ tsp nutritional yeast powder in food for pets or humans.

Garlic - 1 garlic oil capsule per day several days before and throughout a trip to wooded, damp areas.

**Prevention is the key**

- Bananas: Mosquitoes love them; do not eat bananas during the mosquito season.
- Scents: Mosquitoes are attracted to perfumes so don't use scented skin lotions, deodorants or shampoo, or even makeup for that matter.
- Clothes: Stay away from black fabrics, which appear to attract the little critters. Wear light coloured clothing and wash clothes in unscented soap. Do not use scented dryer sheets or liquids.
- Cover up by wearing long pants, long sleeves and netting.
- Kids should play in open sunny areas, not near gardens or trees.
- Go inside at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.
- Still water acts as a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Be sure that rain barrels have covers, and that ponds are kept moving with a pump.

**If you do get a bite!**

- Place a slice of fresh onion on the sting.
- Mix sea salt in water and apply to a bite to stop the itching.
- Apply ice to the area to slow absorption of the venom.
- If nothing else is at hand, rub saliva into the bite.

Naturopathic Perspectives

*Dr. Caralei Peters, ND*

*Dr. Laura Grant, ND*

To book an appt, contact:

202-10 George Street

Hamilton, ON L8P 1C8

Tel: 905.528.1661

Fax: 905.528.1991



## Skin Self-Examination: taking a preventative approach to skin cancer

Malignant melanoma, the most dangerous type of skin cancer, is increasing in incidence at a rate faster than any other type of cancer in humans. Almost all skin cancer that is diagnosed early, if treated promptly and appropriately, can be cured. Self-examination is the best way to find skin cancers in their early stages.

### How to Perform a Skin Self-Examination

Skin examinations should be done monthly to help identify skin cancer at an early stage. Get to know the pattern of moles, blemishes, freckles, and other marks on your skin so you can detect any changes. Take a picture of the marks for comparison later on.

- **Facing the mirror, check:** face, ears, neck, chest, and abdomen, both sides of arms, and the tops and palms of your hands.
- **Sitting down, check:** front of thighs, shins, and tops of feet.
- **Sitting and using hand mirror, check:** bottoms of feet, between the toes, calves, and backs of thighs.
- **Standing and using hand mirror/wall mirror, check:** buttocks, lower and upper back, back of neck.
- **Check the scalp:** it may be useful to use a hair dryer to move hair out of the way and get a clear view of the scalp.

### The ABCD's of Skin Moles

While most spots on the skin are normal, any moles exhibiting the following changes should be examined promptly by a dermatologist.

What to look for:

- **Asymmetry:** When one side of the mole does not match the other side.
- **Border:** Irregularity of edges including ragged, notched or blurred edges.

### Risk Factors for Skin Cancer

- History of frequent sun exposure, such as working outdoors or spending extensive leisure time in the sun.
- History of blistering sunburns.
- Family history of skin cancer.
- Large number of moles.
- Fair complexion.
- Light coloured hair and eyes.
- **Colour:** While normal moles are usually a single colour of brown, skin cancer lesions often have uneven colours, including shades of brown, black, white, blue, pink or red.
- **Diameter:** Moles larger than 6 mm should be looked at.
- **Other Warning Signs:** Skin that is scaling, crusting, oozing or bleeding and does not heal; a change in the consistency of a mole; a change in the elevation of a mole including the appearance of a bump or nodule; a change in the skin around a mole; the appearance of a red or flesh-coloured bump or nodule, possibly with a central indentation.

### Choosing and Using Sunscreen

The aim for using sunscreen is to cover exposed areas of skin, including tops of ears, scalps where there is thinning or no hair, noses and bony surfaces. Together with clothing, a hat and shade, sunscreens provide complementary means of protecting your skin.

- Look for natural sunscreen products at your local health food store, choosing products that are SPF 30 or higher.

- Apply 15-30 minutes before going outdoors; re-apply every two hours.
- Remember sunscreen should be used to reduce sun exposure not prolong it.
- Set an example for your child by using sunscreens everyday.
- Acne-prone teens should use a gel or alcohol based products.

### Other Ways to Protect your Skin

- Plan activities when the sun is not directly overhead and the air is cooler. Avoid UV radiation between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Wrap-around sunglasses block 99% of UVA and UVB rays.
- Select hats with a 3-4" brim or front and back flaps.
- Tightly woven clothing that covers all exposed skin act to shield your skin from UV rays. Seek shade: a thick tree = SPF 15, canopy of trees = SPF 30.

### Mosquito Repelling Quinoa Tabbouleh

1 cup	organic Quinoa, rinsed
2 cups	water
¼ cup	olive oil
¼ cup	fresh lemon juice
2	cloves garlic, minced
	Sea salt & pepper to taste
¼ cup	red onion, finely chopped
1 cup	tomatoes, diced
1 cup	cucumber, diced
¾ cup	green pepper, chopped
½ cup	fresh parsley, minced
3 Tbsp	fresh mint, minced
1 cup	sunflower sprouts, rinsed

1. Bring water to a boil. Add quinoa and simmer 10 min or until water is absorbed. Transfer to a large bowl to cool.
2. Into a screw-top jar, mix olive oil, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Screw on lid & shake. Set aside.
3. Combine all ingredients in large bowl with quinoa. Pour on dressing and toss to mix.