



Mosquito-borne diseases – the facts!

- Most mosquitoes are just a nuisance, but some spread disease.
- You can only catch mosquito-borne diseases from the bite of an infected mosquito. You cannot catch them from an infected person or animal.
- The best protection from mosquito-borne diseases is to avoid mosquito bites.
- Mosquito-borne diseases typically occur around inland waterways and coastal regions.
- Mosquitoes need water to breed. Heavy rains and flooding can bring more mosquitoes.



Mosquito-borne diseases in Victoria

Ross River virus and Barmah Forest virus disease

The symptoms for Ross River virus and Barmah Forest virus diseases are similar. Both can cause joint swelling and pain, fatigue, fever and rash. Everyone recovers, although some people can have symptoms on and off for a year or more.

Murray Valley encephalitis virus disease

Murray Valley encephalitis virus (MVEV) disease is rare but can be very serious. Encephalitis is a brain infection that can cause the brain to swell, leading to brain damage or death.

Most people who get the virus show no symptoms at all. For those that do, it can take around seven to 28 days between getting bitten and becoming sick. Symptoms include high fever, severe headache, seizure (especially in young children), neck stiffness, drowsiness and confusion. In severe cases, delirium and coma can follow.

If you have any health concerns see your doctor or phone NURSE-ON-CALL 1300 60 60 24.



For more information contact your local council or visit www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au



If you would like to receive this publication in an accessible format, please phone 1300 651 160 using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required.

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Beat the bite!

Protect yourself and your family from mosquito-borne diseases



For more information visit www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Beat the bite!



We love getting outdoors while the weather is warm. The problem is – so do the mozzies. They're not just annoying; some mosquitoes can transmit serious diseases.



There are simple ways you can Beat the bite! and protect yourself and your family.

Many mosquitoes bite at dusk and dawn, but in some areas mosquitoes will also bite during the day.

Protect yourself

Wear loose-fitting clothing when outdoors

- Mosquitoes can bite through tight-fitting clothes.
- Make sure cuffs around ankles and wrists are firm.

Use effective mosquito repellents on exposed skin

- Products containing picaridin or DEET are the most effective. The greater the strength, the longer the duration of protection.
 - Use repellents according to the product label, and reapply frequently, particularly after swimming, showering or heavy sweating.



Protect babies and small children

- Use mosquito repellents safely and follow the instructions on the product label.
- Never allow young children to apply their own repellent.
- Choose a lower strength repellent (no more than 20 per cent picaridin or DEET) and apply a thin, even layer as required.
- Cover their skin as much as possible.
- Dress them in loose fitting clothes.
- Drape mosquito nets over prams, strollers and infant carriers, ensuring there are no gaps.

Mosquito-proof your holiday

Ensure your accommodation is mosquito-proof

- Check that your accommodation, including caravans, are fitted with well maintained fly screens.
- Use mosquito nets in tents and cabins.



Don't forget to pack repellent and long, loose clothing

- Check you've packed plenty of mosquito repellent containing picaridin or DEET.
- Take long, loose-fitting clothes for all the family, including the kids.
- Take some mosquito coils or repellent candles – they can be effective in small outdoor areas.

Mosquito-proof your home

Try to prevent mosquitoes from entering your home

- Maintain fly screens on windows, doors and vents.
- Use 'knockdown' sprays, plug-in "zapper" vaporisers or mosquito coils.
- Ceiling or floor fans can reduce mozzies.
- Remember, try to prevent mosquitoes from entering your home in the first place!

Remove stagnant water so mosquitoes can't breed

- Remove disused pots and tyres.
- Cover or overturn trailers, wheelbarrows, boats and tools.
- Clean gutters and drains and mend leaking taps.
- Change pet drinking bowls, bird baths and vase waters at least once a week.
- Put sand around the base of pot plants.
- Keep swimming pools well maintained or empty.
- Keep fish ponds tidy with minimal vegetation.
- Keep lawns and gardens trimmed back.

Check your rainwater tank or water storage devices

- Water tanks must be completely sealed. Check lids, covers and inlet pipes for any gaps.
- Fit removable screen mesh to the outlet end of overflow pipes and to all inlets.
- Make sure any water collection containers have secure lids or screens.

