



Using Insect Repellents Properly



The Maine Board of Pesticides Control recommends the following precautions when using insect repellents:

- Repellents should only be applied to exposed skin and/or clothing (as directed on the product label). **Do not use under clothing.**
- **Never** use repellents over cuts, wounds, or irritated skin.
- Do **not** apply to eyes and mouth, and apply sparingly around ears. When using sprays do not spray directly onto face; spray on hands first and then apply to face.
- Do **not** allow children to handle repellents, and do **not** apply to children's hands. When using on children, apply to your own hands and then put it on the child.
- Do **not** spray in enclosed areas. Avoid breathing a repellent spray, and do **not** use it near food.
- Use just enough repellent to cover exposed skin and/or clothing. Heavy application and saturation is unnecessary for effectiveness; if biting insects do **not** respond to a thin film of repellent, apply a bit more.
- After returning indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water or bathe. This is particularly important when repellents are used repeatedly in a day or on consecutive days. Also, wash treated clothing before wearing it again.
- If you suspect that you or your child are reacting to an insect repellent, discontinue use, wash treated skin and then call your local poison control center. If/when you go to a doctor, take the repellent with you.
- You and your doctor can get specific medical information about the active ingredients in repellents and other pesticides by calling the Maine Poison Center at 1-800-442-6305 or the National Pesticide Telecommunications Network (NPTN) at 1-800-858-7378. NPTN operates from 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Pacific Time) 9:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. (Eastern Time) seven days a week or at <http://ace.orst.edu/info/nptn/>.



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