



Iowa Department of Public Health

Use of Mosquito Repellent on Children

Can insect repellents be used on children?

- Repellent products must state any age restriction. If there is none, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has not required a restriction on the use of the product.
 - For example according to the label, oil of lemon eucalyptus and PMD (the synthesized version of oil of lemon eucalyptus) products should NOT be used on CHILDREN UNDER 3 YEARS.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that repellents with DEET should not be used on infants less than 2 months old.

How should repellent be applied on children?

- Always follow the recommendations on the product label.
- Do not allow young children to apply insect repellent themselves; have an adult do it for them.
- When using repellent on a child, apply it to your own hands and then rub them on your child.
- Avoid children's eyes and mouth and use it sparingly around their ears. Do not apply repellent to children's hands. (Children may put their hands in their mouths.)
- Use enough repellent to cover exposed skin or clothing. Don't apply repellent to skin that is under clothing. Heavy application is not necessary to achieve protection.
- Do not apply repellent to cuts, wounds, or irritated skin.
- Do not spray aerosol or pump products in enclosed areas or around food.
- Keep repellents out of reach of children.
- After returning indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water.
- If repellent is applied to clothing, wash treated clothing before wearing again. Check label for specific instructions.

Are there additional ways to protect children from mosquito bites?

- The best way to prevent mosquito bites is to avoid being outdoors between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active, this is especially important for babies for whom there are no recommended repellents.
- Children (and adults) can wear long pants and long sleeves while outdoors.
- Some repellents, such as permethrin, can also be applied to clothing. Check label directions.
- Mosquito netting can be used over infant carriers.
- Remove containers with standing water that provide breeding places for mosquitoes.