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Mosquito and Tick Season Begins

Summit County Public Health: Mosquito and tick season has officially begun in Summit County and Summit County Public Health would like to remind residents to take every precaution to eliminate the risk of mosquito bites that can carry diseases, such as West Nile virus, and tick bites which can transmit Lyme and other diseases. According to the Ohio Department of Health, mosquitoes are most active from May through October and ticks are most active April through September.

Mosquitoes

The species of mosquitoes that transmits West Nile virus, La Cross Encephalitis, and other diseases can be found in Summit County.

“It is very important to remember that there are simple precautions you can take while traveling and at home to help prevent mosquito borne diseases”, said Sara Cochrane, Mosquito Program Supervisor, Summit County Public Health.

Mosquitoes can be indoors or outdoors and some species will bite during the day while others bite at dusk and dawn.

Tips to protect yourself from mosquitoes:

- Wear light colored long-sleeved shirts, long pants, shoes and socks.
- Stay in places with air conditioning or that use window and door screens to keep mosquitoes outside.
- Make sure screens in windows or doors are in good repair.
- Sleep under a mosquito bed net if you are overseas or outside and are not able to protect yourself from mosquito bites.
- Mosquitos are not efficient at flying so putting a fan out to mimic a breeze where you are sitting will help keep mosquitos away.
- Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents. All EPA-registered insect repellents are evaluated for effectiveness.



- Always follow the product label instructions
- Re-apply insect repellent as directed.
- Do not spray repellent on the skin under clothing.
- If you are also using sunscreen, apply sunscreen before applying insect repellent.

It is important to eliminate possible mosquito breeding grounds around your home to help protect yourself:

- Get rid of standing water around your property.
- Empty containers that may hold water such as buckets, flower pots and birdbaths.
- Make sure all gutters are clean and allow water to flow
- Keep wading pools empty when not in use.

Ticks

It is important for residents to take precautions to reduce their exposure to ticks. Ticks live in grassy, wooded or brushy areas and are found throughout Summit County. However due to the deer population inhabiting more residential areas ticks are becoming more common in those areas as well.

Tips to protect yourself from ticks:

- Avoid wooded areas with high grass and brush and walk in the middle of trails.
- Use EPA-registered tick repellent and follow the directions on the label.
- Wear long pants and tuck them into your socks.
- Wear light colored clothing; it makes it easier to see ticks.
- Perform frequent tick checks including the places ticks like to hide: hair, under arms, behind the knees and in belly buttons.
- Check pets and kids after they have been outside in areas where ticks may live.
- After coming inside tumble dry clothes in high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks on dry clothing.



Steps to remove an attached tick:

- Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.
- Pull upwards with even pressure. **DO NOT** twist or jerk the tick which may cause parts of the tick's mouth to break off and remain in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth parts with tweezers.
- After the tick is removed, clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol, or soap and water.
- Before disposing of the tick, have the tick identified or identify it yourself. Identifying the type of tick that was removed may aid in disease diagnosis if the victim becomes ill or develops symptoms of disease. **Call Summit County Public Health at 330-926-5600 to schedule a drop off or you can email pictures of the tick to tick@schd.org.**
- Dispose of the live tick by submersing it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed container/bag, wrapping it tightly in tape, or flushing it down the toilet. Never crush a tick with your fingers.
- If you remove a tick from your body, please watch for fever, rash, muscle or joint pain or other symptoms. If you experience any of these symptoms contact your healthcare provider.

For more information/resources on the prevention of mosquito and tick borne diseases go to:

<https://www.scph.org/animal-and-pest-control>, <https://www.scph.org/pest-control/tick-resources>,
<https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/zoonotic-disease-program/diseases/tickborne-diseases>,
<https://www.cdc.gov/vector-borne-diseases/prevention/index.html>.

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