

Village Pediatrics of Chapel Hill



21 Tick & Mosquito

Summer Nuisances are Starting to Show their Ugly Little Heads...

Several patients have already entered our office, here at Village Pediatrics of Chapel Hill, P.A., wondering about tick bites and how to treat them. Any child who plays outside is susceptible to getting a tick bite. However, children should not be discouraged from playing outside for this reason. If children are playing in an area known to be infested with ticks, it is recommended that precautions be taken, such as putting long pants on that can be taped to children's socks. Parents can then apply insect repellent to children's pants to help ward off some of these nasty little critters. This product is called permethrin and should ONLY be applied to clothing, bed nets and camping gear.

We recommend a tick/mosquito/insect repellent that has one of the following three active ingredients to be applied directly to exposed skin:

- 1) Picaridin (KBR 3023)- Usually comes in 5-10% strength and can be used on children older than 2 months of age.
- 2) DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide) – Usually comes in strength of 10 - 30% and can be used in children over two months of age. (see table below for recommendations)
- 3) Lemon eucalyptus (p-menthane 3, 8 diol) – Should not be used on children under age three.

Parents and other care providers also need to be diligent about doing a head to toe search of their children's bodies when coming inside after playing outside. Ticks should be removed when noticed. The easiest and least painful way to remove ticks is to apply DAWN dishwashing liquid directly to the tick site and allow it to sit for 10-15 minutes. Then the dead tick can simply be wiped off with a cotton ball. We're not sure why, but only DAWN seems to be effective at doing this!

Why do we worry about tick bites? Illness causing bacteria live in the ticks and can be transmitted by the tick bite. Lyme Disease is very rare in North Carolina. It is transmitted through the bite of the small sized deer tick. Symptoms are fever, muscle aches, joint pains, and a "bulls-eye" rash at the site of the tick bite. Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever is endemic in North Carolina, and is caused by bacteria living in the medium sized dog tick. The symptoms of this illness include fever, muscle pains, neck stiffness, headache, and a red spotted rash that begins around the wrists and ankles. This is a serious illness and can lead to seizures and death. Both of these illnesses are treatable with the right antibiotics!

Diagnosis requires a high degree of suspicion and a blood test. Another tick that is common in our area is the Lone Star Tick. It is similar to the dog tick but is larger in size with a characteristic white spot on it's back. This tick transmits a bacteria that causes "STARI" (Southern Tick-Associated Rash Illness) and symptoms include fever and a "bulls-eye" rash at the site of the tick bite. This illness is usually short-lived and resolves without complication.

Tick bites are common BUT disease transmission is not, therefore children do not need to see a health care provider after every tick bite. Typically, symptoms of illness appear within three weeks of being bitten, so if your child is bitten, remove the tick (by soaking in DAWN!) and mark your calendars. If your child develops fever (>101° F), night sweats, rash, bulls eye lesion around bite or muscle / joint pains within that three week period then call your health care professional. Additionally, the longer a tick is attached to the skin, the more likely disease transmission will occur, so do those head to toe checks frequently!!

Recommendations for DEET containing repellants

User's Age	Conc. of DEET	Application Instructions
Two months to less than two years	10% or less	Apply only once daily
Two years to less than 12 years	10% or less	Maximum of three applications daily
12 years and older	30% or less	Follow label precautions

Do not allow children to put the repellent on themselves. Do not use combination sunscreen and repellent products that have high levels of DEET (sunscreen needs to be reapplied after extensive sun exposure and swimming whereas highly concentrated insect repellent should not be reapplied due to potential toxic effects).

- For additional information visit these websites or contact Village Pediatrics.

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/rmsf/Q&A.htm>

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/stari/index.htm>

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/diseases/lyme.htm>

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