



# Mosquito & Tick Protection for Kids



Source: michiganmedicine.org

## USE DEET WITH CAUTION

DEET is the most effective defense against mosquitoes, approved for babies 2 months and older.

- Choose the right strength: Use 6% to 7% for a quick 1–2 hours outside, and up to 30% for long hikes. Never exceed 30% for children.
- Apply safely: Apply once a day in an open area. Avoid hands, face, or irritated skin.
- Skip combos: Do not use sunscreen-bug spray combinations. Sunscreen needs frequent reapplication, but DEET does not.
- Pro-tip: Spray a hat, let it dry, and place it on your child to keep bugs away from their face.

## CONSIDER SMART ALTERNATIVES

- **Chemical alternatives:** Picaridin is highly effective. For kids over age 3, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus is a great natural choice.
- **Physical barriers:** Wear shoes, long sleeves, and pants. Avoid outdoor activity during peak bug hours (dawn and dusk).

## PROTECT AGAINST TICKS

Repellents like DEET only repel ticks; they do not kill them.

- **Treat gear:** For woody areas, treat clothing and tents with **permethrin**, which kills ticks on contact.
- **Safety rule:** **Never** apply permethrin to skin. On clothes, it lasts up to 6 weeks or 6 washes.



## MASTER THE "TICK CHECK"

Ticks must usually be attached for 24 hours to transmit Lyme disease, so early detection is key. Check your child immediately upon coming indoors, focusing on:

- Hairline and behind ears
- Armpits and belly button
- Behind knees and between legs



## REMOVE TICKS PROPERLY

- Remove ticks immediately. Wash hands and the bite area, then apply antibiotic ointment.
- **Wood Ticks:** Grasp close to the skin with tweezers and pull straight up. Do not twist.
- **Deer Ticks:** Because they are tiny, scrape them off with a fingernail or credit card edge if tweezers aren't handy.

## KNOW WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR

- Use ice or calamine lotion for normal itching. Contact your pediatrician if your child develops any of these symptoms 3 to 14 days after a bite:
- Fever, headache, or body aches.
- A bull's-eye or expanding rash (classic sign of Lyme disease).
- A spotty rash (sign of Rocky Mountain spotted fever).

## "TUCK METHOD"

- Wear light-colored clothing to spot crawling bugs easily.
- Tuck pant legs into long socks to block ticks from crawling up skin.

### KNOW YOUR TICKS

- **Wood Ticks:** Size of a watermelon seed. Can transmit Rocky Mountain spotted fever.
- **Deer Ticks:** Size of a poppy seed. Can transmit Lyme disease (though less than 2% of bites result in infection).



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