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# Healthy News

Brought to you by the South Heartland District Health Department

## Stay safe from ticks & mosquitoes

Outdoor activity can boost your mental health and improve your fitness. But the warmer months are also a time when mosquitoes and ticks are active, so it is important to know how you can protect yourself against bites from these creatures. Some mosquitoes and ticks can carry diseases that cause illness or permanent health issues in humans.

### Here are ways to help limit your exposure & risk of bites from ticks and mosquitoes:

- **Clothing:** Wearing long sleeves, pants, and socks when outside during the peak hours and locations of mosquito activity makes it harder for mosquitoes to reach your skin; light-colored clothing makes it easier to spot ticks that have attached themselves to your clothing. Tuck long pant legs into your socks to prevent ticks from crawling inside pants.
- **Insect Repellent for ticks and mosquitoes:** Use chemical insect repellent containing DEET or Permethrin. Read and follow the label directions prior to application of these products.
- **Perform thorough tick checks** at least daily if you have been outside in areas, such as tall grasses, that could be infested with ticks. Check everywhere a tick could hide: under the arms, in and around ears, inside the belly button, as well as in and around hair. Be sure to check children or older adults carefully after they have played or worked outside.

### Best way to remove ticks:

- Grasp the tick as close as possible to the skin, and pull firmly upward to
- dislodge the mouth parts from the skin.
- Try to avoid leaving parts of the tick under the skin, as this can also lead to infection.
- Clean the tick bite with an antiseptic such as an iodine scrub, rubbing alcohol, or water containing detergents.



### Make sure your home & yard won't attract these pests:



- Empty standing water from anything that might fill with water, such as flower pots, gutters, tires and buckets.
- Drill a drainage hole in tire swings and at least weekly empty and replace the water in outdoor pet bowls, children's wading pools, or bird baths.
- Use screens when your windows or doors are open.
- Consider keeping grasses short or avoiding walking in tall grasses.



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