



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BITE BUGS BACK: INSECT REPELLENTS THAT REALLY WORK

Mosquitoes are a nuisance for all of us in the Coastal Bend, and can transmit diseases such as Zika and West Nile Virus. Many products that claim to protect us, but some don't work at all, while others are excellent.

"Consumer Reports® studied insect repellents and found that DEET concentrations of 15-30% were the most effective," said Professor John Bowman of the Texas A&M Rangel School of Pharmacy. "DEET is very safe and is the only product that is safe for pregnant women in their second or third trimester. No repellent is safe during the first trimester of pregnancy"

Picaridin 20% sprays (Ranger Ready®, Sawyer Premium 20%®) were also highly effective.

Skin So Soft Bug Guard Plus IR3535®, Coleman DEET Free Insect Repellent®, Bite Blocker BioUD® are synthetic chemicals that were less effective than DEET and picaridin, but still provide protection.

Permethrin (Repel® and Sawyer® Clothing Protectants) is effective when sprayed on clothing. A U.S. Army study showed effectiveness even after more than fifty washings.

Oil of lemon eucalyptus 30% is an effective natural insect repellent. Other fragrant plant oils such as citronella (lemongrass), geranium, and lavender, repel insects for only a few minutes. Eating garlic or taking vitamins is not effective

The best insect repellent is prevention. Be sure you have no standing water in your yard. Use the mosquito spray products on your yard after heavy rains and repeat as needed. Ask your neighbors to do the same.

For more information please contact the Regional Health Awareness Board.

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