

Avoiding Outdoor Pests

(NAPSA)—At your next barbecue or outdoor function, it's important to be sure the food you serve is the main course—not your guests.

While insect bites are often itchy or annoying, doctors warn they can lead to more serious problems.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 20,000 confirmed cases of insect-related illnesses—such as West Nile virus and Lyme Disease—are reported each year.

To protect yourself and your family, try these tips to keep bugs at bay:

- Apply an effective repellent to your body, clothing and shoes. Traditionally, repellents containing the chemical DEET have been recommended for their long-lasting protection. However, a new natural repellent, Repel Lemon Eucalyptus, has been clinically proven to last as long and be just as effective as repellents with DEET. The product, which comes in lotion form, lasts six to eight hours per application and is safe for the whole family.

- Be aware of the surrounding environment in which your outdoor activities are taking place. Insects often live near stagnant ponds or puddles of water, or in dense vegetation.

- Keep covered. Wear light colored, loose-fitting clothing such as a long sleeve pullover, long pants, socks and shoes. Avoid wearing red and avoid scented soaps and shampoos, lotions, oils or perfumes.



Some insect repellents made with natural ingredients can ward off insects as effectively as chemical based repellents.

- If you spend time in your backyard, be sure to frequently change the water in birdbaths and empty children's wading pools, toys and other containers holding stagnant water when not in use. They can be breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Also, consider appropriate outdoor lighting. Incandescent lights attract mosquitoes, while florescent lights neither attract nor repel them.

- Be alert to peak times of day when insect activity is at its highest—at dawn, dusk and in the evening. Additionally, use window and door screens to prevent any unwanted “house guests” from finding their ways into your home.

For more information visit www.destinationoutdoors.com.