



Top Tips for Mosquito Bite Avoidance

Bite avoidance aids in the prevention of insect-borne diseases, such as malaria and zika

For malaria prevention, remember A B C D:

Awareness of risk

Countries have different malaria risks and it's important that you're aware of this risk before travelling. Your risk for some countries will depend on any medical conditions you may have, your age, whether you're pregnant/breastfeeding, and your trip length and duration.

Bite avoidance

1. **Repellents** - use DEET at concentrations between 20-50%. DEET at 50% lasts up to 12 hours. DEET is suitable in the second and third trimester of pregnancy and when breastfeeding, as well as in children over two months old (check the packaging of the repellent). When both DEET and sunscreen are required, use SPF 30-50 and apply DEET **after** sunscreen. Repellents containing icaridin (picaridin), as an alternative to DEET, should be at least a 20% in concentration.
Mosquitoes that spread malaria bite mainly from dusk to dawn but other diseases are spread by daytime biting mosquitoes, therefore insect repellents should be used throughout the day and night.
Use biocides safely. Always read the label and product information before use.
2. **Insecticides** - Such as permethrin, spray in a room to kill resting mosquitoes.
3. **Environment** - Ensure you are sleeping somewhere with effective air conditioning and screening on windows and doors. If not, sleep under a mosquito net that's been treated with insecticide. Mosquito nets should be free of tears and tucked into the mattress.
4. **Clothing** - wear light, loose fitting trousers, socks, and long-sleeve tops, especially at night when most malaria-carrying mosquitoes bite.

Chemoprophylaxis (antimalarial medicines)

These are the medicines used to help prevent malaria. These are not 100% effective, however when used as advised, antimalarials are very successful therefore it's important you take these exactly as recommended and for the right duration of time. Make sure you read the leaflet before taking your antimalarials.

Diagnosis

Suspected malaria is a medical emergency. You must seek medical help straight away if you experience flu-like symptoms including: fever/sweat/chills, muscle pain/tenderness, malaise (discomfort), headache, diarrhoea, or cough. Be aware of these symptoms during your trip, and even several weeks, months and up to a year after you return.

Myths - There is **no evidence** to support the following remedies as repellents:

- ❖ Herbal remedies or homeopathy
- ❖ Electronic 'buzzers'
- ❖ Vitamin B1 or B12
- ❖ Garlic or savoury yeast extract spread
- ❖ Tea tree oils, bath oils, citronella oil

Malaria prevention is only one aspect of pre-travel advice

Other tips to help you stay healthy during travel

Vaccinations

You may need to consider vaccinations for your trip to help protect against some of the serious diseases found in other parts of the world. You should get advice on which vaccinations you need preferably at least eight weeks before you're due to travel, although even if travelling at short notice you should still seek advice. Boots offers a Travel Vaccinations and Health Advice Service, speak to the pharmacy team about this.

Sunscreen and Sun Safety

Sunburn can increase your risk of skin cancer. It can happen abroad or here in the UK. To help prevent sunburn, stay in the shade during the middle of the day, particularly between 11am-3pm when the sun is the strongest, and cover up with suitable clothing, hat and sunglasses. Take extra care with children. Use sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15, and at least four-star UVA protection. Apply and re-apply frequently and liberally.

Useful resources

This factsheet isn't intended to cover everything that you need to consider before your trip. You can speak to your pharmacist if you have any questions or concerns about your trip and here are some useful websites:

<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheets>

<https://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/livewell/travelhealth/Pages/Travelhealthhome.aspx>