

Updated version (27-09-2018– UM) see: www.travelhealth.be

INSECT REPELLENTS

Insect repellents contain a product that repels insects without killing them.

- Smear all non-covered parts of the body, but avoid contact with mucous membranes (eyes, mouth), wounds, eczema stains or severe sunburn.
- Make sure you don't forget any spots because the product only works on the spot where it's applied
- Wash your hands after use.
- Wash off the product if you are in a mosquito-free room (especially useful for pregnant women and young children).
- Do not put the product on to children's hands and keep it out of the reach of children
- All recommended products listed below are effective against mosquitoes but only moderately active against fleas and ticks
- You can also apply repellents to clothing but the effect is very limited. Clothing impregnated with an insecticide (permethrin), such as Nosi Life® or Colombia Bug Shield®, is effective in combination with repellents on bare skin.

Which products are recommended?

DEET

- DEET is diethyl-meta-toluamide or N,N-Diethyl-3-methylbenzamide
- The recommended concentration is 30 to 50%. (20% or lower doesn't work long enough and more than 50% doesn't work significantly longer). DEET 20-30% gives protection for 4 to 6 hours; a higher percentage of DEET at 40-50% gives protection up to about 8 hours. The duration of effectiveness is often shorter than indicated on the packaging. On average they must be applied every 4-6 hours.
- If you also use sun cream, apply the sun cream first and then DEET. Because DEET reduces the effectiveness of sun cream, use a sun cream with a higher protection factor (30 or more).
- DEET damages plastics.
- Pregnant women may use 20-30%

- 20-30% may be used to protect children from 6 months onwards against dangerous diseases, such as malaria. There are conflicting recommendations; according to some guidelines, from 2 months; according to others, from 2 years or even only from 12 years. Advantages and disadvantages must be weighed against each other. Use DEET in children under 2 years of age only if they are unable to be protected in any other way. Wash DEET off as soon as they are in a mosquito-free room or sleeping under an impregnated mosquito net.

Icaridin or picaridin

- The recommended concentration is 20-25%
- Does not damage plastics
- Use in pregnant women is permitted, although there is little information about it
- (P)icaridin may be used in children from 2 years but there is little information on use in children under 2 years of age.

IR3535

- The recommended concentration for protection against malaria is 30-35%; in other situations 20% is sufficient.
- Use in pregnant women is permitted, although there is little information about this
- 20% IR 3535 may be used in children from 6 months old

Citriodiol

- also called p-menthane 3,8 diol or PMD is a eucalytus oil derivative
- The recommended concentration is 20-25%
- There is little information about citriodiol during pregnancy, but it can probably be used.
- Use in young children from 6 months onwards is permitted at the same concentrations as in adults.

Products that are not recommended because they offer insufficient protection:

- "Pure" essential oil of lemon eucalyptus is not recommended because it is insufficiently effective.
- Products based on vegetable substances, are only effective for very short periods (e.g. citronella is only active for a few minutes).
- Bracelets with an insect repellent are insufficiently effective
- Devices that (should) keep the mosquitoes away by means of (remote) sound are worthless!
- The effectiveness of taking vitamin B1 has never been proven.