

FIGHT THE BITE

Tips to Protect Yourself From Mosquito Bites And Mosquito-Borne Diseases

(NAPSA)—For many, the warmer weather ushers in a return to the outdoors. Whether planning a family BBQ, a hike through the mountains or a camping trip in the woods, there is one thing many people forget when making their plans—mosquitoes.

While no one enjoys scratching mosquito bites, the biting critters are more than just a seasonal nuisance. Mosquitoes may carry and transmit numerous diseases, such as West Nile virus. With more than 2,400 cases of West Nile virus reported by the Centers for Disease Control in 2004, safeguarding yourself and your family is crucial.

For reducing mosquitoes around your home and keeping yourself protected, Ralph Bram, Ph.D., former national program leader of medical entomology at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, recommends remembering the five D's:

- **Drain** standing water that has collected to prevent mosquito breeding. Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water so any backyard items that could harbor water, such as pool covers, old tires, buckets, flowerpots, toys and birdbaths, should be frequently drained or removed.



- **Dawn and Dusk** are prime times for mosquitoes, so try to limit outdoor exposure during this time of day. Also, make sure there are no holes in screen doors and windows so that the home remains free from mosquitoes.

- **DEET-based** insect repellents are the most effective. Before spending time outdoors, apply an insect repellent that is DEET-based, such as Ultrathon insect repellent from 3M, which provides continuous protection for up to eight hours.

- **Dress** appropriately. Wear protective clothing such as long-sleeved shirts or blouses, long pants, socks and hats to minimize areas of skin exposure. For extra protection, spray clothing with a DEET-based repellent.