

Quality Care For Kids Newsletter

May 2023 | Summer Safety

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The weather is getting warmer, and this is great for outdoor activities. It is important for children to play outside and has big health benefits, but ticks and other insects can get in the way of the fun.

Most insects are harmless, but some bite or sting, which can cause illness, infection or an allergic reaction. To help prevent bites and stings, it is important to know where these insects live. This will help you prepare your outdoor environment to help protect children and staff.

	Where do they live?	How can I keep them away?
Ticks	They like grassy, brushy, and wooded areas. They can also live on animals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remove leaf litter• Mow frequently• Cut tall grass and shrubs• Use child safe insect repellents
Mosquitos	They like forests, marshes, and tall grasses. They need a water source so they can lay their eggs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inspect the playground area and remove pooling or stagnant water (garbage cans, dumpsters, and tire swings).• Use mosquito netting and repellent.• Avoid spending time outdoors in the early morning and in the evening.
Bees Hornets Wasps	They like to build nests in overhangs, trees, playground equipment. They can also build nests in the ground.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid playing near flowering plants in orchards and gardens.

More tips to prevent insect bites and stings:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and socks when possible.
- Cover sandbox areas when not in use.
- Keep all food--indoors and outdoors--covered.
- Limit the time infants spend outdoors and make sure they are closely monitored.
- Make sure window screens do not have holes.
- Outdoor bug “zappers”, and bat houses are not effective against mosquitoes.
- Use an EPA registered insect repellent.
- Do not apply insect repellent to a child’s hands, near their mouth and eyes, or on irritated/scraped skin.

Outdoor safety reminders:

- Actively supervise children at all times.
- Use sunscreen for children older than 6 months of age.
- Check the weather before going outside.
- Provide drinking water both indoors and outdoors.
- Staff should carry any prescribed emergency medication for children with asthma or allergies, such as an inhaler or epi pen and the child’s care plan.

View our Insect Repellent Fact Sheet

https://hhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/portals/1/files/hcci/insect_repellent.pdf

