

## FACT SHEET

# Mosquito-proof your hunting trip

In Victoria, warm and wet weather conditions can lead to ideal breeding conditions and high numbers of mosquitoes that can spread disease. In Victoria, mosquito-borne disease cases of Ross River virus, Barmah Forest virus and, less frequently, Murray Valley encephalitis, have been recorded and the risks are greater in rural and regional Victoria. Unfortunately, these are the areas hunters frequent the most and peak activity for mosquitoes (dawn and dusk) also coincides with the time most hunters are camping or active in the field. Follow these simple steps to protect yourself against mosquitoes during your hunting trip.

### Know what to expect before you leave home

Mosquitoes need water to breed. Heavy rains and flooding coupled with warmer temperatures can produce more mosquitoes. If you plan to visit an area that has recently experienced heavy rain or you are travelling to wetlands or forested areas, you should expect mosquitoes to be present.

### Ensure your accommodation is mosquito-proof

- Check that your accommodation, including caravans, camper trailers, tents and swags, have fly screens fitted.
- You can buy tents that are pre-treated with insecticide or you can purchase products from camping stores which you can apply to tents and swags to repel mosquitoes.
- Use a mosquito net that is treated with a residual insecticide when sleeping outdoors, including in a tent, swag or cabin.

### Pack and use repellent

- Pack enough insect repellent and make sure the product contains either picaridin or DEET, which are repellent ingredients currently regarded as providing the most effective protection. If you have a preferred repellent, make sure you pack it because you may not be able to purchase your favorite product where you are going.



- Apply repellent to all areas of exposed skin. Remember that mosquitoes may already be present when you arrive at your camp or hunting area, so keep a small amount of repellent (e.g. a roll-on) handy, so you can apply it as soon as you arrive.
- Reapply repellent as required, which may be more frequent if sweating or in wet conditions.
- Pack mosquito coils and candles containing insecticide to use at camp sites.

### Wear the right clothing

- Mosquitoes can bite through tight clothing.
- Wear loose-fitting long-sleeved shirts and pants and ensure you wear socks and shoes. Make sure the cuffs around your ankles and wrists are firm so mosquitoes can't fly under your clothes.
- Apply repellent to all remaining exposed skin. Mosquitoes can also bite your scalp, so wear a loose hat.

### How do I know if I have been affected with a mosquito-borne disease?

The two main mosquito-borne diseases spread by mosquitoes in Victoria are Ross River virus and Barmah Forest virus. People may become infected without becoming unwell, or may develop joint swelling and pain, fatigue, muscle aches, headache or rash. Symptoms usually resolve within several weeks but lethargy, joint and muscle pain can persist for many months. Blood tests are required to confirm infection.

### For help or more information

- If you have any concerns about your health, see your doctor or phone NURSE-ON-CALL 1300 60 60 24
- Visit the Better Health website: [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au) and search for 'Beat the Bite'

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