

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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# **How to Fight Back Against Disease-Spreading Mosquitoes**



As the weather warms up in the spring—and really heats up in the summer, it’s time to prepare for another mosquito season. Mosquitoes proliferate in warmer weather, and more mosquitoes mean more mosquito bites.

Biting mosquitoes spread some of the world’s deadliest and most debilitating diseases including Zika virus, West Nile virus, malaria, chikungunya, dengue fever and Eastern Equine Encephalitis.

Wherever there’s moisture during hot summer weather there will be mosquitoes. But you can reduce your chances of getting bitten by mosquito pests by being “mosquito smart” and reducing places where mosquitoes can breed.

## **Why Do Mosquitoes Bite?**

A female mosquito will bite humans, mammals and birds in search of a blood meal so she can produce eggs. She can extract up to four times her weight in blood. Shortly after biting a person or an animal, a female mosquito lays her eggs in standing water—usually only yards from where the bite occurred.

To reduce the chances of getting mosquito bites, keep as much of your skin covered as possible by wearing long sleeves and long pants. Wear light-colored clothing because mosquitoes are attracted to darker colors. Using mosquito repellent is another good way to keep mosquitoes—and mosquito bites—at bay. Apply EPA-recommended repellent directly to skin or clothing, following the instructions on the product label.

## **Reduce Mosquito Breeding Sites**

It doesn’t take much standing water to become a mosquito breeding site. “Some species of mosquitoes can breed in as little as a bottle cap full of water,” said Jonathan Cohen, mosquito control expert and President of [Summit Responsible Solutions](#). “That’s why homeowners and neighborhood associations need to be vigilant in eliminating places where water can collect and stand in their yards and gardens.”

To reduce mosquito breeding grounds, dispose of cans, plastic containers, old tires and other items that can collect water. Turn over wheelbarrows and empty children’s wading pools. Clean clogged roof gutters, which can become prime mosquito-breeding pools. Periodically empty the saucers under ceramic pots to make sure they are not harboring mosquito larvae.

To prevent mosquitoes from breeding in places where water collects—including ponds, bird baths, animal watering troughs, gutters, ditches, drainage pipes and rain barrels—use a mosquito control product that contains [BTI to kill mosquito larvae](#). BTI (*Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis*) is a bacterium that naturally kills mosquito larvae before they can grow up to become disease-



spreading adults. Even though BTI is deadly to mosquito larvae, it is harmless to people, pets, fish, wildlife and beneficial insects. BTI is the active ingredient in Mosquito Dunks<sup>®</sup>, the top-selling biological mosquito control product. When a donut-shaped Mosquito Dunk<sup>®</sup> is placed in standing water, the BTI in the Dunk<sup>™</sup> will kill mosquito larvae for 30 days or more.

In places where small amounts of water collect—such as tree holes, potted plant saucers, water reservoirs in self-watering planters, tires, and even in water-collecting plants like bromeliads, a BTI product called Mosquito Bits<sup>®</sup> is a good way to kill mosquito larvae. Mosquito Bits<sup>®</sup> granules can be sprinkled into virtually any place where water can collect. Mosquito Bits<sup>®</sup> can also be used to kill mosquito larvae in swampy areas and other areas where water cannot be drained. In addition, Mosquito Bits<sup>®</sup> are highly effective as a “shock treatment” in water where immediate larval control is needed due to an extremely dense population of mosquito larvae, because the Bits release the active ingredient, BTI, at once. The Mosquito Bits<sup>®</sup> application can be immediately followed by the addition of the Mosquito Dunks<sup>®</sup> for long-term control.

By reducing exposure to mosquitoes, limiting breeding sites and using the most effective types of mosquito control products, you can greatly reduce your chances of being bitten by disease-carrying mosquitoes.

Mosquito Dunks<sup>®</sup> and Mosquito Bits<sup>®</sup> are available at fine garden centers, hardware stores, home centers and online retailers. For more information visit [www.summitresponsiblesolutions.com](http://www.summitresponsiblesolutions.com).

**Photo Caption:**

*Chemical-free Mosquito Dunks<sup>®</sup> kill mosquito larvae before they can become biting, disease-carrying adults. The active ingredient in Mosquito Dunks<sup>®</sup> is a naturally occurring bacterium called BTI that is deadly to mosquito larvae but harmless to other living things.*