



For any information regarding the Georgia Poison Center please contact us at:

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Georgia Poison Center



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SUMMER EXPOSURES

Safe Use Of Bug Repellents

Bug repellent products are sold in a variety of different forms: sprays, solids, lotions and products that you burn (candles). You may be surprised to learn that many of these products contain pesticides and are responsible for many unintentional poisonings our center receives each year. It is best to always use caution when using any product that contains pesticide. Here are some helpful tips to consider.

Always read labels and identify any active ingredients contained in the product.

Avoid using any of these products on the face, especially sprays. When using this product, spray clothing before getting dressed and minimize the amount you spray directly on your skin. Remember, use sprays outdoors or in a well ventilated room.

Products that require burning, always use outdoors.

Avoid mixing bug repellents with other products such as sun block or tanning products.

Avoid using aerosols near open flames, food and cooking or eating areas.



What's Bugging You?

Bites of all kinds are common during the summer months. Any bite causing symptoms such as hives, rash, difficulty breathing, nausea or vomiting requires immediate medical attention.

For stinging insects, such as wasps, bees or hornets, gently remove the stinger (if present) by scraping it from the wound. DO NOT squeeze the stinger, this may force more venom into the wound. Clean the area with an antiseptic like alcohol and apply an ice pack or cold, wet washcloth to the area. Fire ants do not leave stingers, but you can treat their bites the same way as a bee sting.



Stinging caterpillars have fine hair on their bodies that break off and inject venom when brushed against the skin. To treat, gently touch the affected area with scotch tape to remove the hair and then treat it as you would a bee sting.

Tick bites increase during the summer months. Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF) and Lyme disease are illnesses transmitted by the bites of some ticks. The attachment and bite of a tick are painless. Anyone working or playing in wooded or grassy areas should check for ticks daily. To remove a tick, grasp it with a pair of tweezers at the head as close to the skin as possible and gently pull the tick loose. DO NOT use your fingers to remove the tick. Symptoms of RMSF usually develop within 3-10 hours after the tick attaches itself. The symptoms usually begin with fever, followed by a measles-like rash that starts around the wrists and ankles. Lyme disease is transmitted most commonly by the deer tick. Deer ticks are found in grassy, wooded areas. These ticks are very small and often go unnoticed. Symptoms of Lyme disease usually develop within days and include a rash or patchy areas at the site of the bite. Flu-like symptoms (fever, chills, headache) can occur within days to weeks of the bite. Months later, stiffness, difficulty concentrating/remembering, swollen joints and fatigue can occur.



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Spiders that are dangerous to man include the black widow and brown recluse. Seek medical attention if you are bitten by either of these spiders. The black widow is identified by a red hour glass shape on its underside. These bites can cause severe stomach pain and stiffness within an hour of the bite. While the bites are seldom fatal, they do require medical attention. Brown recluse spiders are identified by a violin shape on its back. The bite results in a blister-like sore, sometimes taking on a bulls-eye appearance. Often these areas do not heal and get larger over time. If bitten, seek medical attention immediately.



Georgia is home to a variety of poisonous and nonpoisonous snakes. If a snake bite occurs, keep the victim calm and warm. Get the victim to the nearest medical facility immediately. DO NOT give them food or a drink. Applications of ice, cutting, suction or tourniquets are no longer recommended since they do more harm than good.

For more information on bites and stings, call the Georgia Poison Center.

Pesticide Safety!



Pesticides are any chemical used to destroy, prevent or control pests. Insecticides (insect killers), herbicides (weed killers), fungicides (fungi killers) and rodenticides (rat and mice killers) are pesticides commonly used in and around the home. These products can be extremely harmful if used improperly.

Most poisonings are the result of careless use, misuse or mishandling of pesticides. To prevent a pesticide poisoning, follow these safety guidelines.

- Before you buy a pesticide, determine your needs. You may want to contact an agricultural authority for advice.
- Store pesticides in locked cabinets and up and out of the reach of children. Put pesticides safely away as soon as they are brought home and immediately after each use. A locked cabinet in a well-ventilated area is the safest way to store pesticides. Never put these chemicals in cabinets where food, medical supplies or cleaning materials are stored.
- Always store chemicals in their original container and never remove the label. Never transfer pesticides to drinking containers such as soft drink bottles, milk or juice bottles. Make sure you read the label information for storage directions; some pesticides must be protected from freezing temperatures.
- Always read the label before you use a pesticide. Note any special information such as using the product during extreme temperatures.
- Always wear protective clothing which includes gloves, closed toe shoes, goggles and if directed, a mask.
- Before treating an area, remove any toys, food, furniture, dishes, and pots and pans from the area. Wait until the area is dry before returning the items. Keep children and pets away until the area is dry as well. Always clean up any spills immediately.
- Apply pesticides only under acceptable weather conditions. Do not spray on dusty or windy days.
- When you have finished applying the pesticide, clean up the equipment and safely dispose of any containers.

If a poisoning occurs, call the Georgia Poison Center immediately! Do not wait for symptoms to occur.