

Controlling mosquitoes around the home

Most of the time mosquitoes are annoying, however, some mosquitoes can transmit diseases. Mosquito-borne diseases in Victoria include Ross River virus and Barmah Forest virus disease and, although rare, Murray Valley encephalitis virus disease which can be very serious.

Mosquito-borne diseases typically occur around inland waterways and coastal regions. Mosquitoes need water to breed so heavy rains and flooding can attract more mosquitoes.

The best protection from mosquito-borne diseases is to avoid mosquito bites and by following these simple steps you can protect yourself and stop mosquitoes breeding on your property.

- Mosquitoes can breed in the smallest amounts of water, so remove anything where water can collect, such as unused pots and tyres.
- Cover or overturn trailers, wheelbarrows and children's playground toys to avoid water collection.
- Change pet drinking bowls and bird baths regularly in warm weather.
- Keep swimming pools well maintained or when they are not in use keep them empty or securely covered.
- Keep fish ponds tidy with minimal vegetation around the edges.
- Keep lawns and gardens trimmed back to reduce the areas where mosquitoes rest.
- Regularly clean gutters and drains so water runs freely.
- Check lids or covers to water tanks or water collection containers to ensure they are completely sealed.
- Fit removable screen mesh to the inlet and outlet overflow pipes of water tanks.
- Try to limit outdoor activity if lots of mosquitoes are around, typically dusk and dawn.
- Cover as much exposed skin as possible and wear loose fitting clothes, make sure cuffs around ankles and wrists are firm.
- Use mosquito repellents safely and follow the instructions on the product label. Products containing picaridin or DEET are the most effective..

For further information, visit Beat the Bite at www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au