Mozzie-proof your home

Nothing destroys the peace of home like that bothersome buzz! Mozzies are not just annoying – some mosquitoes can carry serious diseases. Follow these simple steps to make your home a mozzie-free sanctuary.

Keep ‘em out!

- Maintain flywire screens on windows and doors. Screens should be no coarser than 12 x 12 meshes per 25mm.
- If you don’t have screens, sleep under mosquito nets treated with insecticides (for example, synthetic pyrethroids).
- Use ‘knockdown’ sprays and plug-in vaporising devices.
- The use of ceiling or floor fans can reduce mozzies.

Remove stagnant water where mozzies breed

- Discard unused tins, tyres and similar rubbish, clean gutters and drains regularly and mend leaking taps.
- Change pets’ drinking water and the water in vases, pot plants and bird baths at least once a week.
- Put sand around the base of pot plants.
- Keep swimming pools chlorinated, salted or empty if not in use.
- Keep fishponds stocked. Fish eat the mozzie larvae.
- Overtur boats and dinghies or remove the drain plug so they do not hold water.
- Drill holes in tyres used for swings, playgrounds and garden surrounds to allow water to drain.
- Remove weeds and grass from drains to enable them to drain freely.
- Keep roof guttering in good repair and regularly remove leaves and debris so that pools of water do not form.
- Keep lawns and gardens well maintained so that you are not providing shelter for adult mosquitoes.

Check your rainwater tank or water storage devices

- Make sure that any tops, lids, covers and inlet pipes are close-fitting.
- Fit removable screen mesh to the outlet end of overflow pipes and to all inlets.
- Make sure any water collection containers have secure lids or screens.

Mozzie facts

- Not all mosquitoes carry diseases. Most mosquitoes are just a nuisance.
- You can only catch mosquito-borne diseases from the bite of an infected mosquito. You cannot catch them from an infected person or animal.
- The best protection from mosquito-borne diseases is to avoid mosquito bites.
- Mosquito-borne diseases typically occur around inland waterways and coastal regions.
- Mosquitoes need water to breed. Heavy rains and flooding can bring more mosquitos.

Mosquito-borne diseases in Victoria

The symptoms for Ross River Virus and Barmah Forest Virus diseases are similar. Both can cause joint swelling and pain, fatigue and muscle aches. Some people also develop a rash and may also experience a fever. Everyone recovers, although some people can have symptoms on and off for a year or more.

Murray Valley Encephalitis Virus (MVEV) disease is rare but can be very serious. As with other forms of encephalitis (brain infection), it can cause swelling of the brain, which can lead to brain damage or death. Most people who get the virus show no symptoms at all. Symptoms include high fever, severe headache, seizure (especially in young children), neck stiffness, drowsiness and confusion. In severe cases, delirium and coma can follow.

If you have any concerns about your health, see your doctor or phone NURSE-ON-CALL 1300 60 60 24

For more information visit www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

If you would like to receive this publication in an accessible format, phone 1300 651 160, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required. Authorised by the Victorian Government, Melbourne. April 2011 (1102031)