



BUGS *Off!*



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Before you crack open the anti-insect sprays, first think about all the non-toxic things you can do to keep them away. Get rid of standing water (where mosquitoes breed), and don't hang out where they do (outside between dusk and dawn, in long grass, etc). If it's a windy day or if you cover yourself up with long sleeves, long pants and socks, you shouldn't need insect spray at all!

Chemical and synthetic ingredients in bug sprays often don't break down in the environment so they linger and can cause harm to plants and animals, other than mosquitoes. The most familiar, DEET, comes with warnings like; avoid eyes, mouth, ears, cuts and irritated skin. Don't let kids apply it and use only in low concentrations.

For more info go to www.QueenOfGreen.ca.



White Vinegar

Bug Bite Relief

Dab a little white vinegar on a cotton ball to immediately take the sting out of mosquito or other insect bites.

Epsom Compress

Bug Bite Relief

Mix two cups Epsom salts (from grocery store, health food store or drug store) with enough tap water to dissolve them. Soak a face cloth in the mixture to make a compress. Dab the soaked cloth onto bites.



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Herbal Insect Repellant

Insect Repellents

2 ½ teaspoons essential oil (any combination of basil, cedar, citronella, juniper, lemon, myrrh, palmarosa, pine, rose geranium, rosemary)

Few drops peppermint essential oil (optional, for fragrance)

1 cup grain alcohol (eg vodka)

Mix ingredients in a glass jar with a tight-fitting lid. If you like, you can transfer small amounts into smaller bottles that can easily fit in a backpack or purse. Experiment. Various oils best complement different body chemistries.

White Vinegar

Insect Repellents

Plain white vinegar sprayed or rubbed with a cloth onto exposed skin or clothing will keep mosquitoes away. You'll need to reapply often.



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Essential Oil Bug Sprays

Insect Repellents

9 drops citronella essential oil

9 drops peppermint essential oil

9 drops lemongrass essential oil

1 tablespoon grain alcohol (vodka)

¼ cup spring water

3 ounces distilled water

1 ounce grain alcohol (vodka)

6 drops lavender essential oil

3 drops tea tree essential oil

3 drops citronella essential oil

Add all ingredients to a spray bottle. Let mellow for a few days, allowing the essential oils to blend. Spray on skin as needed or use as room spray (around windows and doors) to keep mosquitoes away.

Combine ingredients in spray bottle. Make this a few days before heading camping or hiking! The longer you can let it mellow, the more effective it will be.



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Homemade Citronella Candle *Bug Bite Relief*

Citronella oil is derived from a wild grass and can be found at health food stores and grocery stores.

1 cup soybean wax or beeswax (beeswax is thought to hold scent better)

15 drops Citronella essential oil

Braided cotton wick

Metal wick disc

Stick to set up the wick (chopstick, pen, etc)

Candle container (glass jar, metal tin, sea shell, etc)

Scissors

Food thermometer

Melt wax in the top of a double boiler or in the microwave (in a glass container). You'll need a thermometer to be sure it is heated to 160 – 180° F (70 - 80° C). (Do not leave your thermometer in the glass container if you're using the microwave method!) One cup of wax will melt down to ½ cup of liquid wax. Let it cool to 125° F (52° C). Add 15 drops of essential oil and stir.

While the wax is cooling, set up the wick in the container of your choice:

- Thread a piece of wicking through the metal wick disc, tie a knot in the bottom and pinch the sides of the disc to hold the wick in place (some craft stores will sell the whole wick already made).
- Set this in the bottom of your container, centered as best as you can. (*Tip- pour some wax at the bottom of your container and place metal wick holder with braided cotton into the soft wax. Let that cool before you do the full pour.)
- Pull the wick straight and tie it to the chopstick or pen which will rest on the sides of your candle container. Make sure the wick is in the centre of the container.

When wax and essential oils are blended and about 120 F, pour liquid wax into the container. As it cools, burst any air bubbles around the wick (if you don't, the candle may collapse).

If you find that you have a sunken area of wax around the wick, follow the same procedure to melt more wax and do a second pour. Sometimes a second pour isn't necessary.

Don't fill to the top of your container (you want some room for the wax to melt when the candle is lit). When wax has hardened, trim wick to ¼ inch for optimal burning.



Facts on Wax and Wicks

- Burning candles made of synthetic materials (paraffin) may emit small amounts of toxins such as acetone, benzene, lead and mercury-polluting the air in your home (and the world). (Paraffin is a type of petroleum compound called alkane hydrocarbons. It's the by-product of petroleum refining.)
- Many scented and slow-burning candles use lead in their wicks. Lead in this form is banned in Canada, but check the wicks of store-bought candles anyway (especially imports); if there is any shiny metal in the wick core, don't buy 'em and don't use 'em. Cotton wicks are the best choice.
- 95 per cent of synthetic fragrances are made from petroleum, a non-renewable resource.
- Beeswax is naturally-occurring (made by bees!), renewable resource that burns long and clean and it's biodegradable. Manufacturers sometimes alter or refine beeswax; the real stuff can be identified by its sweet, honey smell. Beeswax is the only naturally-occurring wax on planet Earth!
- Candles made from soy bean wax are white, clean-burning and made from an easily-renewable plant. Soybean wax doesn't spread cancer-causing fumes and can handle the addition of essential oil fragrances.



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