



Know Before You Go

Preparing to Visit a National Forest

Mosquitoes

There is a risk of mosquito bite every time you enter a forest or work in and around the woods. In addition to being uncomfortable, mosquito bites can cause illnesses, including several types of encephalitis, dengue and West Nile virus. The chance that any one person is going to become ill from a single mosquito bite remains low. The risk of severe illness and death is highest for people over 50 years old, although people of all ages can become ill. Preventing mosquito bites is the best way to reduce the risk of infection from the diseases mosquitoes can carry.



Safety Checklist

- Apply insect repellent containing DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide).
- Treat your clothes with permethrin repellents. Do not use permethrins on your skin.
- Wear loose-fitting clothes to help prevent mosquitoes from reaching the skin.
- Whenever possible, wear long-sleeves, socks and long pants.
- Wear clothing that helps you blend in with the background. Mosquitoes hone in on color contrast and movement.
- Avoid perfumes, colognes, hair sprays, lotions and soaps; all of which attract mosquitoes.
- Reduce exposure by staying indoors during peak mosquito hours (from dusk until dawn).
- Avoid lingering in places where mosquitoes lay their eggs, usually around standing water.
- Wash mosquito bites with mild soap and water.

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