

Hoopa Tribal Radio

KIDE - 91.3FM

The First Solar Powered Radio Station In California

***P.O. Box 1220
Hoopa, CA 95546
530-625-4245 phone
530-625-4046 fax***

**2015 08.11 Health Matters
Bug Bites**

This is Health Matters, reporting on bug bites

**We're talking fleas, ticks, spiders, scorpions, bees, wasps and hornets.
Some of these bugs pack enough venom to cause serious discomfort.
Some can provoke a dangerous allergic reaction.**

Fleas are the least worrisome. While people have flea allergies, they are not a health threat. Pets can have nasty skin reactions, but people quickly recover, even from multiple flea bites

The main hassle from fleas is an infested house. Pets carry fleas inside where they hang out and multiply like mad. Before you know it there are fleas all over the place and they're happy to bite humans. Flea bites are uncomfortable. And a full-fledged attack is a sorry sight, especially on infants and toddlers.

Once a home is seriously infested, bug bombs seem to be the only answer. Unless you go for the vacuum, scrub and launder every thing-in-sight approach. Bug bombs, aka Total Release Fogger products, combine pesticides with flammable aerosol propellants.

Really? Flammable propellants?

Yes. And bug bombs can cause fires -- but not if you follow directions.

My question about bug bombs has always been, are they toxic to people? The first detailed answer came out in 2008, when the federal Centers for Disease Control released a report on illnesses and injuries associated with bug bombs. The study examined data from eight state pesticide departments, including California's.

466 bug-bomb-related illnesses or injuries were identified in the states studied -- not a huge number. In most cases the person affected either failed to vacate the space before the fogger went off, or re-entered the space too soon after it discharged. The study concluded that bug bombs can pose a risk for acute, but usually temporary health impacts. It also concluded that the best approach is to prevent flea infestation in the first place. In other words, keep your pets flea-free.

As for mosquitoes, they do cause tropical fevers. But here in Hoopa they don't pose that risk. Allergies, yes -- even nasty ones, to the point of eyes swollen shut or a puffy arm. So kids who are allergic to mosquitoes need to be protected. Again the question is what health risks are associated with insecticides used to prevent mosquito from biting?

DEET-based pesticides are used round the world against mosquitoes. In fact, they are applied 200 million times a year. Given this staggering number, and the relatively few cases where it has caused health problems, DEET is considered safe to use by research scientists and federal agencies.

DEET passes through the placenta and has been found in the cord blood of newborns. But studies document that babies born of mothers who used DEET have birth weights, developmental milestones and

physical and mental abilities equal to babies whose mothers did not use the pesticide.

The issue with DEET is using it correctly. It should not be inhaled or ingested. It should not be applied over cuts, wounds or irritated skin. It shouldn't be applied to young children's hands or near the eyes and mouth. It should not be over-applied and should be washed off once outside.

But chemicals pose risks to some. If you don't want chemical insecticides on your body -- whatever their safety profile -- there's always the option of using natural repellents.

Moving on to bites you need to watch them closely -- namely spider, scorpions and ticks. Black-widow bites often don't hurt, but they leave two red fang marks. Black-widow venom causes swelling, a bruised look and can hurt. Tick bites that sprout a bulls-eye rash warn of a possible lyme disease infection. Any of these symptoms should be checked out by a doctor. Same with pain and feeling from a scorpion bite.

As for bee and hornet stings, there are several symptoms that mean it's time to call 911. 1. Itching, hives or swelling over a large part of your body. 2. Your face, throat or tongue starts to swell. 3. Trouble breathing. 4. Dizziness. 5 Stomach cramps, nausea or diarrhea. Half the people allergic to bees don't know it. Also, you can develop this allergy at any time.

Getting medical help is imperative with these symptoms. A bee-allergic person who isn't treated immediately can die.

Health Matters is a production of KIDE Hoopa CA. Produced and written by Cynthia Poten. Engineered by Joseph Orozco. Our readers were Joy Hostler, Jay Renzuli and Joseph Orozco. For this audio and more information, visit our download area at www.kidefm.org. Thank you for listening.

Sources and Links

**[http://pets.webmd.com/ss/slideshow-flea-and-tick-overview?
ecd=wnl_spr_073115&ctr=wnl-spr-073115_nsl-
promo_2&mb=LNc592%40G9vgduNlhZNZg92dEpmNqbUHLs9uNo7Wv2oA%3d](http://pets.webmd.com/ss/slideshow-flea-and-tick-overview?ecd=wnl_spr_073115&ctr=wnl-spr-073115_nsl-promo_2&mb=LNc592%40G9vgduNlhZNZg92dEpmNqbUHLs9uNo7Wv2oA%3d)**

**[http://pets.webmd.com/flea-tick-control-15/rm-quiz-making-flea-mistakes?
ecd=wnl_spr_073115&ctr=wnl-spr-073115_nsl-
hdln_3&mb=LNc592%40G9vgduNlhZNZg92dEpmNqbUHLs9uNo7Wv2oA%3d](http://pets.webmd.com/flea-tick-control-15/rm-quiz-making-flea-mistakes?ecd=wnl_spr_073115&ctr=wnl-spr-073115_nsl-hdln_3&mb=LNc592%40G9vgduNlhZNZg92dEpmNqbUHLs9uNo7Wv2oA%3d)**

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5741a3.htm>

<http://www.popsci.com/article/science/deet-safe-use>

<http://www2.epa.gov/insect-repellents/deet#safety>