

# Natural Health News

August 2013

EVERGREEN SPA & WELLNESS  
ELY, MN

## NATURAL SOLUTIONS TO DEET

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Summertime calls most of us to spend time outdoors. However, bugs can make our time outdoors very uncomfortable and are carriers of disease at worst. Additionally, most commercial insect repellants contain a chemical known as DEET, which should be avoided at all cost. DEET (N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) is used in more than 230 different products—in concentrations of up to an astounding 100 percent. If a chemical melts plastic or fishing line, it is not wise to apply it to your skin. Duke University Medical Center spent 30 years researching the effects of pesticides. It was discovered that prolonged exposure to DEET can impair cell function in parts of your brain—demonstrated in the lab by death and behavioral changes in rats with frequent or prolonged DEET use. Children are particularly at risk for subtle brain changes because their skin more readily absorbs chemicals in the environment and chemicals more potently affect their developing nervous system. Other potential side effects to DEET exposure include: memory loss, headache, muscle weakness and fatigue, shortness of breath, muscle and joint pain, as well as tremors. Another potentially harmful chemical found in many bug sprays is permethrin. This chemical is a neurotoxin. The EPA has even deemed this chemical carcinogenic and it is also damaging to the environment, and is particularly toxic to bees and aquatic life. It should also be noted that permethrin is highly toxic to cats. Even a few drops can be lethal to your feline pet. It is used as an ingredient in some topical flea products, so when you see "for dogs only" on the label, it likely contains permethrin. Fortunately, there are highly effective repellents on the market comprised of natural botanical oils and extracts that are every bit as effective as DEET, but with none of the potentially harmful effects. You can also make your own repellent using one of the following: cinnamon leaf oil, clear liquid vanilla extract mixed with olive oil, catnip oil (according to one study, this oil is 10 times more effective than DEET), or wash with citronella soap, and then put some 100% pure citronella essential oil on your skin. Once you have been bitten, there are many herbs and other natural agents that are soothing to the skin, and have anti-inflammatory properties. Try one of the following natural solutions listed on the next page.

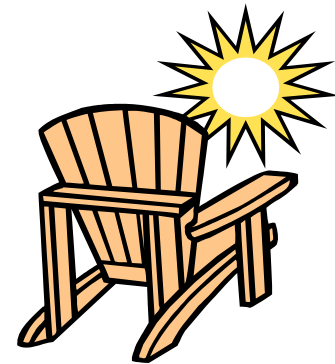
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## TREATING BITES AND STINGS WITH HERBS AND OTHER NATURAL AGENTS

Swiping a cooled tea bag over your bites will help, as the tannins in the tea acts as an astringent, reducing swelling. For bites all over your body, try soaking in a bathtub of warm water with two to three cups of apple cider vinegar added to it. The acidity of the vinegar can help stop the itch. Alternatively, dissolve some baking soda in your bath and soak for about 30 minutes. You can also mix some baking soda with a small amount of witch hazel to create a paste, and apply directly to the bite. The witch hazel works synergistically with the baking soda, making for a more potent mix to reduce swelling. Using either ice or heat are other options that can help ease the discomfort associated with bug bites. It has also been found that covering the bite with tape works really well to suppress the itch. An article in *Scientific American* recommends using a simple ice pack to treat painful insect bites in lieu of analgesics. The article also explains why common topical steroids like hydrocortisone aren't always the answer—one reason being that you are not supposed to put them on broken skin. There are also other natural option such as: Aloe Vera, Calendula (an herb with soothing properties), chamomile, cinnamon (in addition to repelling mosquitoes, it has antibacterial and antifungal properties), cucumber (helpful for reducing swelling), raw organic honey, lavender (antimicrobial and soothing), neem oil, tea tree oil (helpful for healing cuts, burns, infections and a multitude of other skin afflictions), basil (contains camphor and thymol, two compounds that will relieve itching. Either crush up some fresh herb and apply directly to the bite, or buy the essential oil), lemon and lime (both have anti-itch, antibacterial and antimicrobial actions, however, avoid applying citrus juices to your skin when outdoors as blistering can occur when exposed to sunlight), peppermint (the cooling sensation can block other sensations. Either the essential oil or crushed fresh leaves will do). I recommend avoiding harsh chemicals and experimenting with some natural alternatives instead.

## AUGUST SPECIALS

Doctor Kracker—Seedlander or Pumpkinseed Cheddar	25% OFF
Good Health—Avocado & Sea Salt Chips	25% OFF
Woodstock—Organic Peanut Butter (smooth or crunchy)	25% OFF
Woodstock—Raw Almond Butter, 16 oz.	25% OFF
Field Day—Fruit-filled Cereal Bar, 7.8 oz.	30% OFF
Maple House—Organic Maple Syrup, 32 oz.	30% OFF
Real Foods—Corn Thins, Multigrain or Original, 5.3 oz.	30% OFF
Dr. McDougall's—Quinoa Salad, variety	25% OFF
Ginger People—Ginger Chews Original—box	25% OFF
Mediterranean Organics—Org. Peach/Apricot Preserve	25% OFF
Mediterranean Organics—Org. Black Cherry Preserve	25% OFF
Seasnax—Seaweed Snack, .18 oz.	25% OFF
Stretch Island—Fruit Leather, assorted	30% OFF
Aura Cacia—Organic Essential Oils, assorted	30% OFF
Desert Essence—Tea Tree Shampoo & Conditioner	30% OFF
<b>AND MANY MORE ITEMS!</b>	



“A healthy body is a  
guest-chamber for the  
soul; a sick body is a  
prison.”

Francis Bacon

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