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Tick and Mosquito Season Begins

Prevention is the key to protection

Mild spring and summer weather provides the perfect conditions to enjoy outdoor activities. The Mills Co. Public Health Department (MCPH) encourages Mills County residents to make outdoor recreation part of a healthy lifestyle, with a reminder to take precautions against outdoor-related health concerns like West Nile virus and Lyme disease.

“Prevention is the key to protection,” said MCPH Environmental Specialist, Mike Sukup. “If you use preventive measures while outdoors, you can greatly reduce the risk of getting West Nile and Lyme disease.”

To avoid mosquito and tick bites, remember to:

- Use an approved insect repellent according to label instructions (DEET, oil of lemon eucalyptus, picaridin or IR3535). DEET is effective against both ticks and mosquitoes. Wash off insect repellent after coming indoors.
- Pay special attention to protection if you are outdoors during the prime mosquito-biting hours between dusk and dawn.
- Replace or repair worn window screens to keep bugs out of the house.
- Reduce mosquito breeding sites by removing any yard items that may collect standing water, such as buckets, old tires, and toys. Wear light-colored clothing so you can see ticks crawling on you. You can also treat clothing and shoes with permethrin (do not apply directly to skin), which protects through several washings (follow the label instructions carefully).
- After being outside, check your body, clothing, children and pets for ticks.
- Reduce ticks around your home by removing leaves, brush and woodpiles.

For more information about West Nile virus, visit the MCPH Website at www.mcph.millscoia.us or call us at 712-527-9699. Take action today to assure a healthy summer for you and those you love.