As we spend more time outside during the summer, it’s important to take precautions to avoid biting and stinging insects. Washington’s biting insects include: biting flies, fleas, mosquitoes and ticks.

**TIPS TO PREVENT INSECT BITES**
- Wear pants, long sleeves, and socks to cover skin
- Insect repellent clothing is available and effective
- Check yourself, children, and pets for ticks. Remove ticks quickly and carefully.
- Eliminate mosquito breeding areas by emptying sources of standing water (ex: outdoor pet dishes, potted plant trays)
- Cover any gaps in walls, doors, windows, and screens

**SELECTING & APPLYING REPELLENTS OR PERSONAL PESTICIDES**
- Use products that list an EPA Registration Number. These products are proven to be safe and effective when used correctly.
- Always read product labels before applying repellents/pesticides. The labels contain information about active ingredients, instructions for safe use, and what to do in case of accidental exposures.
- Follow the application instructions. Do not spray directly onto the face, open cuts, or irritated skin. Do not apply to a child’s hands and do not allow children to handle the product or apply to themselves.
- If also using sunscreen, apply sunscreen first and repellent second.
- Store safely. Keep products up high, out of sight, and out of reach of children.

**INFORMATION ABOUT REPELLENTS AND PERSONAL PESTICIDE PRODUCTS**

**DEET Containing Products**
- DEET is considered the gold standard for insect repellent.
- DEET has not been found to cause environmental damage or health problems (when used correctly).
- DEET-containing products are safe to use on adults, children, & infants older than 2 months.
- The concentration of DEET in a product relates to how long it will be effective for, not whether it will work better. Lower concentrations may need to be reapplied.

**Other Plant-Based Products**
- The CDC recognizes some eucalyptus and citronella plant-based products as effective repellents or protectants.
- Do not use products containing oil of lemon eucalyptus (sometimes called OLE or PMD) on children under 3 years old.
- These products generally don’t last as long and may have to be applied more frequently.