DEET can help to protect you against tick-borne diseases and the multitude of mosquito-borne diseases. DEET is often sold and used in spray or lotion in concentrations up to 100%. The Center for Disease Control recommends 30-50% DEET to prevent the spread of disease carried by insects. DEET is an effective solvent, and may dissolve some plastics, rayon, spandex, and other synthetic fabrics.

Q. When should I use mosquito repellent?
A. Apply repellent when you are going to be outdoors. Even if you don't notice mosquitoes there is a good chance that they are around. Many of the mosquitoes that carry diseases bite between dusk and dawn. If you are outdoors around these times of the day, it is especially important to apply repellent.

Q. How often should repellent be reapplied?
A. In general you should re-apply repellent if you are being bitten by mosquitoes. Always follow the directions on the product you are using. Sweating, perspiration or getting wet may mean that you need to re-apply repellent more frequently.

Q. How does the percentage of active ingredient in a product relate to the amount of protection it gives?
A. Typically, the more active ingredient a product contains the longer it provides protection from mosquito bites.

- A product containing 23.8% DEET provided an average of 5 hours of protection from mosquito bites.
- A product containing 20% DEET provided almost 4 hours of protection
- A product with 6.65% DEET provided almost 2 hours of protection
- Products with 4.75% DEET were both able to provide roughly 1 and a half hour of protection. (These examples represent results from only one study and are only included to provide a general idea of how such products may work. Actual protection will vary widely based on conditions such as temperature, perspiration, and water exposure.)

Q. What is permethrin?
A. Certain products which contain permethrin are recommended for use on clothing, shoes, bed nets, and camping gear, and are registered with EPA for this use. Permethrin-treated clothing repels and kills ticks, mosquitoes, and other arthropods and retains this effect after repeated laundering.

Q. Where can I find these repellents?
A. Most of these repellents are sold at multiple retail, discount and drug stores. A wider selection may be available at "outdoor" stores or in hunting and camping sections.

Q. What are some general considerations to remember when using insect repellents?
A. Always follow the recommendations appearing on the product label.

- Use enough repellent to cover exposed skin or clothing. Don't apply repellent to skin that is under clothing. Heavy application is not necessary to achieve protection.
- Do not apply repellent to cuts, wounds, or irritated skin.
- After returning indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water. (This may vary depending on the product. Check the label.)
- Do not spray aerosol or pump products in enclosed areas.
- Do not spray aerosol or pump products directly to your face. Spray your hands and then rub them carefully over the face, avoiding eyes and mouth.