• In tick-infested areas, wear lightweight long pants and long-sleeved shirts. Also, be sure to wear closed-toe shoes and socks. Light, solid-colored clothes will make it easier to spot crawling ticks.

• Tuck the bottoms of pant legs inside boots or wear knee-high socks to reduce the chances of ticks crawling up legs. Treat the outside of clothing and exposed skin on legs with an insect repellent containing DEET. Read and follow label directions on the container. Do not use DEET on children younger than two. With older children, use only repellents with 10% DEET or less.

• Check your child for ticks immediately when coming inside. Pay special attention to the scalp, hair, and skin-fold areas.

Most children play outdoors with little negative reaction to the insects that share their world. Take a few precautions in the play area and on outings to protect children from the few insects that can be harmful.

When you have a question, call or visit your local office of The University of Georgia’s Cooperative Extension Service.

You’ll find a friendly, well-trained staff ready to help you with information, advice, and free publications covering agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, 4-H and youth development.

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The University of Georgia and Ft. Valley State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and counties of the state cooperating. The Cooperative Extension Service, The University of Georgia College of Family and Consumer Sciences, and College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences offer educational programs, assistance, and materials to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability.

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CHFD-E 19-26 August 2001

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914. The University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.

Gale A. Buchanan, Dean & Director

The University of Georgia
Cooperative Extension Service
College of Family and Consumer Sciences
and College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences cooperating
During the spring and summer, we can count on warm weather, budding trees, and insects. Most of the time, people and insects get along fine.

Insects can become an instant science lesson and can keep children occupied for long periods of time. However, children are bitten or stung by insects more often than adults because children spend more time outdoors and understand less about possible dangers.

In most cases, reactions to insect bites or stings are mild. The affected area swells and itches and it may be painful.

A cold compress or a little steroid cream may relieve the itching and swelling, as well as the child’s anxiety. Usually, in a few hours or days, the area heals on its own.

Some children may scratch the area until it bleeds or becomes infected, in which case a doctor should take a look.

**Allergic reactions**

Once in a while, a child will develop a severe allergic reaction to an insect bite or sting. Reactions can begin immediately after the child is stung.

Symptoms can include breathing difficulty, hives, and shock. Symptoms of shock are cool, clammy, pale skin; a weak, rapid pulse; thirst; and dizziness or faintness.

If a child has this sort of reaction, seek medical attention immediately.

If one or both parents tends to have severe reactions to insect stings, it is more likely the child will, too.

You may not know until it happens that your child is allergic to stings. As soon as you find out, you must tell your child’s school, child care provider, and other helpers.

The bites and stings of certain insects are more serious than others. Severe allergic reactions are more likely with honeybees, fire ants, and wasps.

Bites of some spiders like the black widow and brown recluse are dangerous and, in some cases, life-threatening. Ticks are common and can be carriers of such diseases as Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever and Lyme Disease.

**What can you do?**

Reduce the number of insect bites and stings by taking a few precautions:

- Most insect stings come from flying insects, such as honeybees, wasps and yellow jackets. Carefully destroy any nests around your home.

- Don’t let your child use perfumes, sweet-smelling suntan lotions, or other products that attract insects.

- Dress in drab clothes while in the woods. Stinging insects are attracted to bright colors and flowery prints. Natural colors such as tan, khaki, and green are not as attractive to insects.

- Inspect your yard on a regular basis and treat with insecticides when necessary for fire ant mounds, wasp nests and beehives. Clean up debris and woodpiles where spiders hide.

- Keep grass well-cut in areas where children play.

- Make the garbage area well away from the play area and keep it clean. Pick up fallen fruit from trees regularly.

- Check your property for anything that might hold standing water, such as old tires or trash. Even small bodies of water become breeding grounds for mosquitoes.