

## How to protect yourself from being bitten:

You can and should try to reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes:

- Minimise the time spent outdoors between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active (with regards to the Asian tiger mosquito, this is active mostly during the daytime)
- Be sure door and window screens fit tightly and are in good repair
- Wear socks, shoes, long trousers and a long-sleeved shirt when outdoors for long periods of time, and when mosquitoes are most active. Clothing should be made of tightly woven materials to keep mosquitoes away from the skin
- Use mosquito netting when sleeping outdoors or in an unscreened structure, and to protect infants when outdoors.
- When it is necessary to be outdoors, apply insect repellent as indicated on the product's label. The more DEET a product contains the longer the repellent can protect against bites. For most situations 10%-25% DEET is adequate and concentrations above 50% DEET do not increase the length of protection. Apply it to clothes when possible and sparingly to exposed skin if the label permits.
- Use fans - mosquitoes are weak fliers and a strong wind produced by a fan not only keeps them from flying but diffuses chemical cues they use to locate blood meals.

The Asian mosquito tiger, *Aedes Aldopictus* has established it self on the Maltese Islands.

In order to transmit diseases the mosquito has to be infected with the pathogen which it would pass on to humans on biting them.


Should you require further information please contact: 21 324 086

Infectious Disease Control Unit  
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# How to protect yourself from mosquitoes and prevent their proliferation





Mosquitoes can be a significant nuisance and are known to be carriers of numerous diseases.

**This leaflet aims to give some basic guidelines on how to prevent the proliferation of mosquitoes and also how to avoid being bitten.**

In particular it provides you with information on how to recognise the Asian tiger mosquito (*Aedes albopictus*) which has recently been found in Malta.



Photo: <http://www.comune.torino.it/ucstampa/2005/aedes-albopictus.jpg>

## How to prevent the proliferation of mosquitoes:

All mosquitoes need water in order to reproduce. Each female mosquito may lay as many as 200 eggs that will transform into larvae, and then into mosquitoes after approximately 7 days.

Therefore the control of this mosquito begins with destroying the places where they lay their eggs which are never far from where people are being bitten.

- Remove any water-filled containers like flower plates, old buckets, food containers and tires.
- Keep mosquitoes from breeding in bird baths, pet water dishes and paddling pools by emptying them at least every 3 days.
- Any puddles, inlets to sewers and drainage systems should be drained not to allow water to stagnate for more than 3 days.
- Gutters should be kept clean of fallen leaves and other debris so that water does not collect in them.
- Flower pots and standing flower vases found outside that can collect water should be filled with sand or fine gravel.
- Man-made outdoor water features, especially fish ponds, should contain fish such as goldfish or guppies as these are known to feed on the mosquito's immature stages.
- Litter can also hold rain water and should be removed. This includes abandoned cars, old machinery and other junk in vacant areas.
- Any standing water in pools, catchment basins, etc, that cannot be drained or dumped can be periodically treated with properly labelled insecticides.
- Maintenance of swimming pools: Keep empty if not in use or regularly maintained with chlorine.
- Businesses should cover tires, store them indoors or treat them with an insecticide for control of mosquito larvae.
- In cases where fish cannot be kept open water reservoirs or wells need to be covered.

## How to recognise Asian Tiger mosquito:

The mosquito:

- *Aedes albopictus* or Asian tiger mosquito is a small mosquito, approximately 2-10mm, in length with a striking black and white pattern.
- It has a characteristic white line across the middle, on its thorax, while its legs are clearly striped in black and white.
- The Asian tiger mosquito typically flies and feeds in the daytime, in addition to at dusk and dawn.
- It bites during the day, and especially at the beginning of the day and at the end of the afternoon, which differentiates it from other mosquitoes which are essentially nocturnal.
- Since they have a short flight range (less than 200m) breeding sites are likely to be close to where this mosquito is found.
- These mosquitoes have a rapid bite that allows them to escape most attempts by people to swat them.
- It lives close to houses where the best conditions for reproduction usually lie.

