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PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Friday, August 04, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Precautions to avoid bites from spiders and other insects

With the summer weather, insects and spiders are more prevalent, and outdoor activities make us more vulnerable to bites and stings. These precautions, from the Pinellas County Health Department, apply at home and in your garage as well as at work:

- When working in enclosed areas such as crawl spaces, ensure that you are wearing protective clothing, including long sleeves tucked into gloves, long pants tucked into boots, and coveralls or a jacket with a hood. Rubber bands over pant legs and sleeves will minimize the possibility of a spider's running up a sleeve or pant leg in a confined situation.
- It's also wise to wear gloves when you work outdoors in potential habitats such as rock gardens or flower beds. Don't put your bare hands in places where you don't have clear visibility, as spiders and insects could be hiding there.
- When indoors, shake all clothing thoroughly if it has been hanging or lying in a spider- or insect-inhabited building. Also shake out blankets and clothes that have been in the attic or an undisturbed closet.
- Check gloves and boots before you wear them.
- Be cautious when moving boxes or other objects that have been undisturbed for some time.
- Vacuum frequently, using a corner attachment to remove spiders and their egg sacs (dispose of the vacuum bag in a container outdoors). Concentrate on corners and the ceiling and anywhere spider webs appear.
- Don't leave clothes on the floor, since people have been bitten by spiders that have found their way into clothing or shoes.

To avoid insect bites when outdoors, take the following measures:

- Wear protective clothing to limit exposed skin. For example, wear long pants when hiking or mowing the grass, gloves while gardening, and shoes or sandals.
- Wear white or light-colored clothing; dark and yellow clothing and flowery designs are more likely to attract insects.
- Use unscented deodorant and rinse off perspiration after vigorous exercise. Many insects are attracted to the scent of deodorants and perspiration.
- Avoid any strong-smelling perfume, cologne, hair preparations or lotions, as some insects may be attracted by the smell.
- Use insect repellants.
- Carefully check outdoor toilets before use.
- The smell of food is a strong attraction for many insects. Cover food and drinks at outdoor events as much as possible. Don't forget to cover garbage as well.

For more information, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/nasd/index.html>

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The mission of the Pinellas County Health Department is to promote, protect and improve the health and safety of our community through public and private partnerships in an environment that respects diversity. www.PinellasHealth.com