

Fight the Bite Poster Contest

This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

Mosquito and tick bites aren't just annoying. They can cause serious diseases, such as West Nile virus and Lyme disease. The high-risk time for diseases from ticks starts in the spring, while West Nile virus peaks in August and September. So why should kids care about diseases from mosquitoes and ticks? A lot of people get sick from mosquito and tick bites! In the U.S., West Nile virus is the most common disease we get from mosquitoes. More than 3,500 cases of West Nile disease in people were reported in 2007. People infected with West Nile virus can experience flu-like symptoms, sometimes with fatigue, that may last for weeks. Others get very sick, with the virus affecting their brain. In rare cases, West Nile virus can cause death.

Ticks also carry bacteria or viruses. Lyme disease is the most common illness caused by ticks in the United States, and kids are one of the groups at highest risk for getting Lyme disease. Typical symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue, and skin rash. If left untreated, infection can spread to joints, the heart, and the nervous system. It's important to see a doctor if you develop these symptoms.

As winter draws to a close there *is* something that fifth and sixth graders, with support from their parents and teachers, can do to help themselves and others prepare for bug season. In 2008, CDC and the DEET Education Program are sponsoring the second annual "Fight the Bite" poster contest. Any fifth or sixth grader can enter the contest by submitting an 11x17-inch poster of original artwork that conveys the theme to fight the bite of mosquitoes and ticks by using repellent and other prevention steps.

Winning posters will be displayed on the CDC website and used in educational materials nationwide to help motivate others to "Fight the Bite." Two winners per state - one in each grade - will receive a \$50 U.S. Savings Bond, and two national Grand Prize winners - one from each grade - will receive a \$1,000 U.S. Savings Bond and a trip to CDC's headquarters in Atlanta for an awards ceremony.

Full rules and details can be found at www.cdc.gov/westnile. But hurry! Entries must be received by April 4, 2008. CDC will post a podcast with information about the winners, so watch this site!

For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov, or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.