Fight Back Against Disease-Carrying Mosquitoes

According to mosquito expert Joe Conlon, Technical Advisor for the American Mosquito Control Association, it is impossible to live in a completely mosquito-free environment. Wherever there's moisture there will be mosquitoes—even in times of drought. But you can reduce your chances of getting bitten by mosquito pests by being "mosquito smart" and reducing places where mosquitoes can breed.

Reduce Mosquito Breeding Sites

It doesn't take much standing water to become a mosquito breeding site. "Some species of mosquitoes can breed in as little as a bottlecap full of water," said Jonathan Cohen, mosquito control expert and President of Summit Responsible Solutions. "That's why homeowners need to be vigilant in eliminating places where water can collect and stand in their yards and gardens."

To reduce mosquito breeding grounds, dispose of cans, plastic containers, old tires and other items that can collect water. Turn over wheelbarrows and empty children's wading pools. Clean clogged roof gutters, which can become prime mosquito-breeding pools. Periodically empty the saucers under ceramic pots to make sure they are not harboring mosquito larvae.
To prevent mosquitoes from breeding in places where water collects—
including ponds, bird baths, animal watering troughs, gutters, tree
holes and rain barrels—use a mosquito control product that contains
BTI to kill mosquito larvae. BTI (\textit{Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis}) is a
bacterium that naturally kills mosquito larvae before they can grow up
to become flying, biting, disease-spreading adults. Even though BTI is
deadly to mosquito larvae, it is harmless to people, pets, fish, wildlife
and beneficial insects.

BTI is the active ingredient in Mosquito Dunks\textsuperscript{®}, the number-one
selling biological mosquito control product. When a donut-shaped
Mosquito Dunk\textsuperscript{®} is placed in standing water, the BTI in the Dunk\textsuperscript{TM} will
kill mosquito larvae for up to 30 days.

In places where small amounts of water collect—such as tree holes,
potted plant saucers and water reservoirs in self-watering planters, a
BTI product called Mosquito Bits\textsuperscript{®} is a good way to kill mosquito
larvae. Mosquito Bits\textsuperscript{®} granules can be sprinkled into virtually any
place where water can collect. Mosquito Bits\textsuperscript{®} can also be used to kill
mosquito larvae in swampy areas and other areas where water cannot
be drained. In addition, Mosquito Bits\textsuperscript{®} are highly effective as a "shock
treatment" in water where immediate larval control is needed due to
an extremely dense population of mosquito larvae, because the Bits
release all of the active ingredient, BTI, at once. The Mosquito Bits\textsuperscript{®}
application can be immediately followed by the addition of the
Mosquito Dunks\textsuperscript{®} for long-term control.

To kill adult mosquitoes, use a permethrin-based insecticide such as
Summit\textsuperscript{®} Mosquito and Gnat Barrier. The permethrin in Summit\textsuperscript{®}
Mosquito and Gnat Barrier kills and repels mosquitoes and other
insect pests for up to four weeks. Simply attach a garden hose to the
hose-end sprayer bottle and spray the yard perimeter and fences, plus the lawn and vegetation where mosquitoes can hide and rest.

By reducing exposure to mosquitoes, limiting breeding sites and using the most effective types of mosquito control products, you can greatly reduce your chances of being bitten by disease-carrying mosquitoes.