

DEET & RID

What is DEET?

DEET (chemical name, N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) is the active ingredient in many insect-repellent products. It repels biting pests such as mosquitoes, sandflies and ticks. It is designed for direct application to human skin to repel insects rather than kill them.

There is no other product as effective as DEET for repelling insects, and it has been used safely for many years throughout the world. However, it should be noted there have been isolated problems associated with 'inappropriate use', where excess amounts of high-concentration products have been used on young children.

Why use insect repellent?

Insect repellents are recommended by many of the world's health organisations as an effective measure to prevent potentially life-threatening insect-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, yellow fever and Japanese encephalitis.

Can RID repellents be used on children and infants?

The US Environmental Protection Agency has determined that when label instructions are followed, DEET can be used by people of all ages. However, we recommend using DEET-based products for children only from 6 months of age to be safe.

All medications should be used with care on a baby. Do not spray directly onto a baby. Instead, apply the repellent with your hands onto the baby, avoiding eyes, lips, and hands. With babies, it is best to expose less skin through appropriate clothing. Another form of effective and safe repellent is to treat babies' clothes with Permethrin.



RID insect repellent range

The RID range has been manufactured in Australia by Thorley Laboratories since 1956. It is widely recognised as the leading insect repellent in a nation where biting and annoying insects are most prevalent.

Note that the 'Tropical' Range has been specifically designed, as the name suggests, for the Tropics of northern Australia, which is directly comparable with the conditions of South East Asia.

The repellents evaporate into the air, producing a chemical barrier around the areas of the body where it is applied.

How to use DEET products safely

- DEET should not be used on infants under two months old or children's bedding or bedclothes — at International Medical Clinic, we recommend using DEET-based products for children from 6 months of age).
- RID should be treated like other medications. A small amount should be applied to the skin to test for irritation or allergic reaction.
- RID should not be applied to broken skin, near eyes, lips, or on mucous membranes.
- The highest concentration recommended for infants and children is 30%.
- Use the lowest concentration for the expected time of exposure (e.g. 7% DEET for about 2 hours of protection and 19% for about 6 hours of protection).
- Keep out of reach of small children because, like many chemicals, DEET can be toxic if ingested.
- Do not allow small children to apply the product themselves.
- Avoid oversaturation. It is not necessary for adequate protection.
- To apply to the face, spray onto hands first, then rub on the face. Do not spray directly onto your face.
- Use just enough to cover exposed skin and/or clothing.
- Do not use under clothing.
- Do not spray in enclosed areas.
- After returning indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water.
- A small percentage of children and adults may be sensitive to chemicals such as DEET. If there is a suspected reaction to the chemical, wash the area and seek medical attention if necessary.

As recommended by Thorley Laboratories, the manufacturer of RID.



PRODUCT

Tropical Strength RID
 pump and roll-on available
 Kids RID & RID 30 plus roll-ons

STRENGTH	EFFECTIVE
19% DEET	6 hours
7% DEET	2 hours





Is it safe to use RID while pregnant?

Studies have shown no toxic effects of the active ingredients on the mother and unborn child when used in small doses. However, if pregnant women travel to an area with Malaria, Ross River virus or Dengue fever, they should be extra careful as these diseases can be severe. They should wear full-length trousers and a long-sleeved top (material must be thick enough to prevent a mosquito from biting through it) and apply repellent to hands, neck and feet if exposed. Repellent should be washed off at night, and they should sleep under a mosquito net.

Research-based evidence

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently issued a Re-registration Eligibility Decision for the chemical DEET. After completing a comprehensive re-assessment of DEET, EPA concluded that as long as consumers follow label directions and take proper precautions, insect repellents containing DEET do not present a health concern. Human exposure is expected to be brief, and long-term exposure is not likely. NSW Department of Health (Australia) promotes DEET-containing insect repellents as the most effective in preventing mosquito bites and mosquito-borne diseases.

The Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) considers DEET to be a safe and effective product with normal use and notes that the acute toxicity of DEET is low and that no reproductive, teratogenic, carcinogenic or mutagenic effects have been reported despite widespread use over many years. They also note that DEET remains the most effective repellent against mosquitoes. However, a UK medical journal article, *The Lancet* (1988), concluded that dangerous doses of DEET would be a total body application of 21% DEET every day for two weeks.

