



## Should kids use bug spray?

The Wilson family was enjoying a long weekend of camping near their favorite lake. Betty had been hearing a lot about [West Nile Virus](#) and mosquitoes on the news all summer and made sure she remembered to bring a new aerosol can of insect repellent containing [DEET](#). As the sun set, the mosquitoes were out in full force, ready to bite. Her 17 year old son, Adam, asked her for the repellent can. Betty carefully read through the [product label](#) and handed it to Adam, explaining only to use the repellent on exposed skin, not to spray it directly on his face, and to wash his hands when he was done. Adam used the product as instructed and set it down so he could go wash his hands.

Doug, Adam's 4 year old brother, had watched Adam use the spray and didn't want mosquito bites either. Doug picked up the can, pushed down on the nozzle, and sprayed his face. Doug's eyes immediately started to burn and sting. He dropped the can and ran screaming to his Mom. Betty calmed Doug down and noticed he smelled strongly of repellent. Adam found the repellent can on the ground where Doug had dropped it and brought it over to his mom. Betty realized Doug had sprayed the repellent into his eyes! She read the first aid section of the product label and flushed Doug's eyes with clean water for 15 minutes. She loaded Doug into the car and rushed to the nearby hospital, being sure to take the repellent container along to show the doctor.

Don't let this happen to you! [Click here](#) to find out how...



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Be sure you keep pesticides, including insect repellents, out of the reach of children. Never allow young children to apply a repellent product themselves. Although Betty [read the label](#), Doug was still able to get hold of the [DEET](#) repellent. Fortunately, having already read the label, Betty knew exactly where to find the [first aid](#) information to quickly help her son.

Always read the entire label of a pesticide before you use it! The statements on insect repellent labels tell how the product is to be applied and include special precautions for children. Some of these precautions are outlined in the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) fact sheet on repellents](#). The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) also provide guidance on the use of insect repellents.

For example, EPA says “Do not apply to eyes and mouth, and apply sparingly around ears. When using sprays do not spray directly onto face; spray on hands first and then apply to face.” and CDC says “Do not allow young children to apply insect repellent to themselves; have an adult do it for them. Keep repellents out of reach of children.” Be sure to wash your hands after the application. If you have questions about insect repellents or other pesticides, call the [National Pesticide Information Center](#) at 1-800-858-7378 to speak a Pesticide Specialist. Remember - “Read the Label First!”

