

# Marathon Information Centre



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## The Menacing Mosquito

Although at time the weather along the Northshore of Lake Superior may be unpredictable, one thing that is definitely predictable in the spring and summer months are those annoying biting flies – the culicidae and the simuliidae – commonly known as the mosquito and the blackfly. In fact, Canada is home to many different blood-sucking insects, and their densities here are among the highest in the world.

Did you know that with the majority of biting flies, the act of blood sucking is restricted to the female? The females require the intake of blood for nourishment, which is necessary for egg maturation. After each blood intake a female mosquito or blackfly will lay a batch of approximately 60 to 300 eggs. This very well explains the abundance of these menaces, and their pestilent nature. Because of this, we must be prepared. Here are some suggestions:

- Bug jackets – these reduce the need for repellents or headnets. (Treated with repellent these jackets can be work for weeks and can be retreated indefinitely)
- Use a headnet.
- Use DEET based repellents. Repellents with a high concentration of DEET (dimethyl-metatolumide) 95 – 100% are especially effective. However, repellents with higher concentrations of DEET tend to evaporate quicker, therefore frequent re-application is necessary.
- Make sure pant cuffs and jacket sleeves have closures such as elastics, draw strings, etc. Socks should be high enough that you can tuck your pant legs into them.
- Wear light coloured clothing – this tends to discourage landing.
- Finally, flies don't appreciate wood smoke, so maybe you should!