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Height 5'7" Bust 34" B Waist 24" Hips 34" Dress 4 US Shoe 8 US  
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SHAPE YOUR LIFE. **HEALTH**

### Bug Off!

You can expect a bumper crop of mosquitoes this summer, thanks to a wet spring in many areas. What's also flying around? Lots of folk "wisdom" about these pesky critters. Here, we set the record straight—so you can scratch less while protecting yourself from West Nile virus and other bug-borne diseases.

- **"Some people are mosquito magnets." TRUE**  
 You're not imagining it: These insects are attracted to carbon dioxide, and people who are heavier, pregnant, or have faster metabolisms tend to exhale more of the gas, says Sharon E. Lester, Ph.D., a professor of entomology at the University of California, Davis.
- **"Tating garlic will keep them at bay." FALSE**  
 Tasting it is useless; researchers at the University of Connecticut Health Center found that people got attacked similarly whether they dined at a garlic-containing grill or a steakhouse. Rubbing pure garlic oil on your skin, however, might help a little—but it's not a very good tactic, says Joe Conlon, a medical entomologist and technical advisor for the American Mosquito Control Association. "Studies show you'll get some protection," he notes, "but during the 20 minutes it lasts, you may need people help."
- **"You taste sweeter during exercise." TRUE**  
 When active, you breathe in and out more heavily and frequently, which means you're releasing carbon dioxide. Also, perspiration contains lactic acid and other chemicals that attract mosquitoes, says Lester. Motion gets their attention as well—although if you're moving quickly, the bugs will have trouble landing on you. For your protection, consider moving indoors.
- **"An electric bug zapper will kill them off." FALSE**  
 Mosquitoes and other biting insects are only drawn to these devices. The crackling you hear is mostly the sound of moths and beetles, which help support the bird population being electrocuted.

**WHAT REALLY WORKS**  
 Scientists have identified some simple mosquito deterrents. **For starters, wear light colors and skip perfume and scented lotion** so you're not mistaken for a flower. Citronella candles may be useful, says Conlon—they contain an essential plant oil that these insects don't like. "But you need a high concentration of the scent for it to work, and it's easy for a light breeze to blow it away." **Your best defense: applying repellents with DEET, Picaridin, IR3535, or lemon eucalyptus oil** before heading outdoors, especially in the early morning and at dusk, when these bugs are out in high numbers.

Always follow insect repellent label instructions and reapply as directed.



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