

## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Insect Repellent Distribution Exercise**


<b>Distribution</b>	
<b>Q1.</b>	<b>Am I eligible to receive the insect repellents distributed by NEA and Temasek Foundation?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NEA and Temasek Foundation are distributing one 30ml bottle of DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide) -based insect repellent to each child enrolled in all pre-schools, primary and secondary schools in Singapore, as well as recipients of Comcare assistance.</li></ul>
<b>Q2.</b>	<b>Why are NEA and Temasek Foundation giving out insect repellents?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dengue fever is transmitted through the bite of the <i>Aedes</i> mosquito. The key to breaking dengue transmission is to keep the <i>Aedes</i> mosquito population low by removing all stagnant water and potential mosquito breeding habitats. Using mosquito repellents regularly to protect against mosquito bites is another action that everyone can take to break the transmission of dengue.</li><li>• NEA and Temasek Foundation thus aim to share information on how we can stop the spread of the dengue virus and fight dengue together.</li></ul>
<b>Q3.</b>	<b>Why are NEA and Temasek Foundation distributing repellents to school children up to secondary schools only?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NEA and Temasek Foundation hope to raise awareness of dengue prevention in these school children and also to encourage their parents and caregivers to take more active dengue prevention actions such as the regular application of repellent and the removal of stagnant water.</li><li>• Additionally, NEA has also been distributing sample bottles of repellents through house visits to residents residing in dengue cluster areas. The distribution of sample bottles of mosquito repellent is intended to nudge residents to adopt the protective measure of using mosquito repellent in dengue clusters and encourage them to purchase their own mosquito repellents, which are widely available in the market. It is important for everyone, especially those residing in dengue clusters to take protective measures against dengue.</li></ul>
<b>Q4.</b>	<b>How effective is relying on schoolchildren to spread the dengue prevention message? Has a similar initiative been done before?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NEA has been educating school children (pre-schools and up) on dengue and its prevention. We have also been engaging school children to share the related information with their parents and caregivers to encourage them to take dengue prevention actions. NEA is also working closely with MOE to reach out directly to parents to urge efforts on dengue prevention. During the last dengue outbreak in 2020, NEA had worked with MOE to distribute repellents to primary and secondary schools in selected dengue clusters (40 cases and above).</li></ul>

<p><b>Q5.</b></p>	<p><b>Why are NEA and Temasek Foundation not distributing repellents to the vulnerable such as the elderly as well?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEA and Temasek Foundation are distributing to Comcare beneficiaries (families with low income) through MSF's Social Service Offices.</li> <li>• NEA has been distributing sample bottles of repellents through house visits to residents residing in dengue cluster areas, regardless of their age. The distribution of sample bottles of mosquito repellent is intended to nudge residents to adopt the protective measure of using mosquito repellent in dengue clusters and encourage them to purchase their own mosquito repellents. It is important for everyone, especially those residing in dengue clusters to take protective measures against dengue.</li> <li>• Insect repellents are available for purchase at most supermarkets and pharmacies across Singapore.</li> <li>• The list of approved insect repellents can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Q6.</b></p>	<p><b>Is this a one-off distribution? How will a one-off distribution help?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This distribution is carried out this year to help battle the ongoing dengue outbreak. Dengue is transmitted through the bite of the <i>Aedes</i> mosquito. The key to breaking dengue transmission is to keep the <i>Aedes</i> mosquito population low by removing all stagnant water and potential mosquito breeding habitats. Using mosquito repellents regularly to protect against mosquito bites is another action that everyone can take to break the transmission of dengue. Through the distribution exercise, we hope to raise awareness of and encourage the practice of applying insect repellent, especially for residents residing in dengue cluster areas.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Q7.</b></p>	<p><b>How does this distribution initiative fit into the larger anti-dengue strategy? What are some other plans to fight dengue?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dengue is transmitted through the bite of the <i>Aedes</i> mosquito. The key to breaking dengue transmission is to keep the <i>Aedes</i> mosquito population low by removing all stagnant water and potential mosquito breeding habitats. Using mosquito repellents regularly to protect against mosquito bites is another action that everyone can take to break the transmission of dengue.</li> <li>• NEA, together with relevant stakeholders and agencies, is conducting intensified vector control operations at dengue cluster areas to rid our public areas and housing estates of potential mosquito breeding habitats. Residents also need to do their part to fight dengue and they can do so by doing the Mozzie Wipeout 'B-L-O-C-K' steps at least once a week to remove stagnant water, as well as take other protective measures such as the S-A-W steps, one of which is to apply insect repellent.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Q8.</b></p>	<p><b>How much is the total cost of this distribution exercise? How much is Temasek Foundation contributing to this distribution exercise?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The distribution is a partnership among Temasek Foundation, MSE/NEA, MOE and MSF.</li> <li>• . For Temasek Foundation, this initiative is part of their Stay Prepared mandate.</li> <li>• The Stay Prepared initiative helps to prepare the Singapore community for emergencies like major accidents, natural disasters, pandemics, severe haze or terrorist attacks.</li> <li>• Other Stay Prepared initiatives include the StayMasked mask distributions, oximeter and mouth gargle distributions to support the Singapore community mitigate the effects of COVID-19. For more info about other Stay Prepared initiatives, please visit <a href="http://stayprepared.sg">stayprepared.sg</a>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Q9.</b></p>	<p><b>Would it be better to spend the time and money on something else?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of reported dengue cases remains high, with more than 17,000 dengue cases reported in the first 6 months of this year/so far this year, exceeding the total 5,258 cases reported for the whole of 2021. It is important for everyone to remain vigilant and ensure that the dengue prevention measures are sustained throughout the next few months, in order to keep dengue cases in check.</li> <li>• Dengue fever is transmitted through the bite of the <i>Aedes</i> mosquito. The key to breaking dengue transmission is to keep the <i>Aedes</i> mosquito population low by removing all stagnant water and potential mosquito breeding habitats. Using mosquito repellents regularly to protect against mosquito bites is another action that everyone can take to break the transmission of dengue. NEA and Temasek Foundation thus aim to encourage the regular application of insect repellent to protect against mosquito bites through the distribution of repellents.</li> <li>• NEA and Temasek Foundation thus aim to share information on how we can stop the spread of the dengue virus and fight dengue together.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Q10.</b></p>	<p><b>Is insect repellent effective in preventing bites from the <i>Aedes</i> mosquito?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topical insect repellent, when applied directly into one’s skin or clothing, is effective as it forms a protective barrier against mosquitoes. It protects one from mosquito bites and should be used, especially by people infected with dengue, to prevent the <i>Aedes</i> mosquito from biting an infected person and transmitting the virus to the next person it bites.</li> <li>• Some types of spatial repellents, such as mosquito coil and chemical-based electric vaporisers or emanators, while can also be effective, are dependent on environmental factors such as wind conditions and activities carried out by a person, which may disrupt the “protected space” of such repellents.</li> <li>• Repellents containing DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide), picaridin or IR3535 as active ingredients are the most effective in repelling mosquitoes.</li> <li>• Besides applying insect repellent, other methods of protecting yourself against mosquito bites include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Spraying insecticide in dark corners around the house (e.g. under the bed/sofa and behind curtains) to kill adult <i>Aedes</i> mosquitoes in areas where they tend to lurk.</li> <li>○ Wearing long sleeves/pants, as the fabric forms a barrier between the mosquito and one’s skin.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Other preventive measures include installing mosquito screens on windows/doors to keep mosquitoes out of your home, sleeping under a mosquito net (especially during the day since <i>Aedes aegypti</i> mosquitoes are day-biting) and using an electronic mosquito zapper to kill mosquitoes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Safety &amp; Use of Repellent</b></p>	
<p><b>Q11.</b></p>	<p><b>How often should I apply the insect repellent?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Away” insect repellent contains 10% DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide) and provides protection of up to 3 hours. Reapplication may be needed as recommended on the product label.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Q12.</b></p>	<p><b>Can I spray the insect repellent directly on my skin?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The insect repellent can be sprayed/applied onto skin and/or clothing, but do not apply over cuts, wounds or irritated skin. Spray the insect repellent evenly at a distance of 6 – 8 inches (15 – 20 cm) from skin and clothing. Use enough to cover exposed skin. For application to face and lower limbs, spray onto hand and then apply to areas requiring protection. Avoid applying insect repellent on the eyes and mouth. After usage, wash hands with soap and water.</li> <li>• If you or your child have not used the insect repellent before, test on a small area of skin first to ensure there is no allergic reaction.</li> </ul>

<b>Q13.</b>	<p><b>Is the insect repellent distributed by NEA and Temasek Foundation safe, especially for use on children?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide) -based repellents are safe for use on children. Use just enough insect repellent to cover exposed skin and/or clothing. Avoid spraying the repellent directly onto your child's face, and avoid the eyes and mouth. Do not apply insect repellent to young children's hands as they sometimes touch/put their hands in their mouth and eyes.</li> <li>• If your child has not used the insect repellent before, test on a small area of skin first to ensure there is no allergic reaction. The repellent should always be used with adult supervision. Do not apply insect repellent on cuts, wounds or irritated skin.</li> </ul>
<b>Q14.</b>	<p><b>Has the safety of the insect repellent been certified by NEA?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Away" insect repellent is registered with the NEA. NEA has evaluated the efficacy of the insect repellent for its intended use and safety of the product when used in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions.</li> </ul>
<b>Q15.</b>	<p><b>Does this repellent contain alcohol?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While the insect repellent contains ethanol as one of its inert ingredients, it is permissible for use by Muslims. This is in line with the Fatwa Committee's decision in 2008 which determined that the alcohol used for medical purposes and treatments is permissible. The topical usage of insect repellent on exposed skin, where insects and mosquitoes can bite, is important in protecting oneself against dengue and other diseases.</li> </ul>
<b>Q16.</b>	<p><b>What should I do if the insect repellent is accidentally ingested?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek medical advice from a doctor immediately.</li> </ul>
<b>Q17.</b>	<p><b>What should I do if the insect repellent gets into my eyes?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold eye open and rinse slowly for 15-20 minutes.</li> <li>• Seek medical advice if the discomfort persists</li> </ul>
<b>Others</b>	
<b>Q18.</b>	<p><b>Are natural insect repellents as effective as DEET-based insect repellents?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repellents containing DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide), picaridin or IR353 as the active ingredient are more effective and/or have longer mosquito-repelling effects than "natural" repellents that use plant-based extracts, such as citronella, eucalyptus and other essential oils.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Q19.</b></p>	<p><b>Is the use of repellent the most effective and best way of preventing being bitten by mosquitoes?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Besides applying insect repellent, other methods of protecting yourself against mosquito bites include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Spraying insecticide in dark corners around the house (e.g. under the bed/sofa and behind curtains) to kill adult <i>Aedes</i> mosquitoes in areas where they tend to lurk.</li> <li>○ Wearing long sleeves/pants, as the fabric forms a barrier between the mosquito and one's skin.</li> <li>○ Other preventive measures include installing mosquito screens on windows/doors to keep mosquitoes out of your home, sleeping under a mosquito net (especially during the day since <i>Aedes aegypti</i> mosquitoes are day-biting) and using a hand-held electronic mosquito zapper to kill mosquitoes.</li> <li>○ Another key action to take to prevent mosquito bites is to ensure that we do not create conditions that are favourable for mosquito breeding. We can keep the <i>Aedes</i> mosquito population low by removing all stagnant water and potential mosquito breeding habitats.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Q20.</b></p>	<p><b>Should I avoid going outdoors to prevent myself and my child from getting bitten by mosquitoes?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Aedes</i> mosquitoes can bite in both indoor and outdoor environments. <i>Aedes</i> mosquitoes prefer to breed in clean and stagnant water easily found in our homes. You can protect yourself by removing potential mosquito breeding habitats at home and practising the 'S-A-W' steps:</li> </ul> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"> <b>S</b>pray insecticide in dark corners around the house  <b>A</b>pply insect repellent regularly  <b>W</b>ear long-sleeved tops and long pants </p>
<p><b>Q21.</b></p>	<p><b>How can I learn more about dengue and dengue prevention measures?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may refer to the NEA website (<a href="http://www.nea.gov.sg/dengue">www.nea.gov.sg/dengue</a>). You may also download the myENV app to receive alerts and information on active dengue clusters and areas with high <i>Aedes aegypti</i> mosquito population.</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Aedes myENV App.jpg</p> </div>
<p><b>Q22.</b></p>	<p><b>I/my child received a faulty bottle of repellent. Who can I contact?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you/your child have/has received a faulty repellent bottle, you may wish to request for an exchange through the school or Social Service Office where the repellent was collected from.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Q23.</b></p>	<p><b>I/my child did not receive the repellent. Who can I contact?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEA and Temasek Foundation are distributing one bottle of insect repellent to each child enrolled in pre-school, primary and secondary schools in Singapore, as well as recipients of Comcare assistance. The insect repellents will be distributed through schools and MSF Social Service Offices from 28 July 2022 onwards.</li> <li>• If you/your child have/has missed the distribution of the insect repellent through your child's school, you may wish to contact the school for information on how to collect the insect repellent.</li> <li>• For recipients of Comcare assistance, the repellents can be collected from your Social Service Office.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Q24.</b></p>	<p><b>I have finished using the insect repellent. Where can I get more and what brand should I get?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insect repellents are available for purchase at most supermarkets and pharmacies across Singapore.</li> <li>• The list of approved insect repellents can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Q25.</b></p>	<p><b>I/ my child is allergic to insect repellent. How else can I protect myself/ my child from dengue?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You can prevent yourself/ your child from being bitten by mosquitoes by wearing long sleeves and long pants, and spraying insecticide in dark corners around the house.</li> <li>• You can also prevent mosquito breeding in your home by regularly practising the following Mozzie Wipeout '<b>B-L-O-C-K</b>' steps:</li> </ul> <p><b>Break up hardened soil</b>  <b>Lift and empty flowerpot plates</b>  <b>Overturn pails and wipe their rims</b>  <b>Change water in vases</b>  <b>Keep roof gutters clear and place BTI insecticide</b></p>