

# HERB STOP



## JUNE HIGHLIGHTS

Summer times mean bites and stings. Most insect bites and stings are more of a nuisance, causing localized itching and redness, but are relatively harmless. Others can be serious. Of course, prevention is always a better option than finding a cure.

### Insect Repellant

Catnip essential oil is about ten times more effective at repelling mosquitoes than DEET, the compound used in most commercial insect repellents, researchers have found at Iowa State University. A Search and Rescue Team member told me 2 years ago that he only uses catnip essential oil and he is pleased with the results and the fact that it is non-toxic. To keep your summer bug-free all you need to do is add 25 drops of catnip essential oil to 4 oz of water. Spray it in your home, especially the crucial areas, where insects live or where they like to enter your home. You can also spray it on you or add it to your lotions, body mists, shampoo, conditioner, or bathwater. This essential oil is totally non-toxic, and completely safe, even for children. Catnip essential oil can be used in your diffuser, candles, light bulbs, etc.

### Personal Insect Repellant

This is an easy to make and very effective personal insect repellent oil. In addition to being a great insect repellent, this oil mix moisturizes and nourishes your skin, and also has a cooling effect.



Coconut oil	4 oz
Citronella	5 drops
Lemongrass	5 drops
Lavender	5 drops
Peppermint	5 drops
Catnip	5 drops

Blend together and massage body and face (avoid the area around the eyes).

### Got Stung, Now What?

I've found that lavender essential oil applied "neat" (undiluted) works extremely well. Lavender essential oil has the capability of neutralizing poisons, contains antiseptic as well as pain-relieving properties, and is exceptionally effective for stings/bites from mosquitoes, spiders, scorpions, poisonous fish, and all other known and unknown poisonous critters. As soon as you notice you have been stung /bitten apply lavender essential oil directly to the site of the sting. You can re-apply the lavender every minute, or you can simply place a few drops on a clean cotton ball and leave it on the affected area. For bee and wasp stings, make sure to remove the stinger first before applying lavender essential oil. In addition, I take echinacea extract internally, to stimulate my immune system, to assist my body in getting rid of the poison and to prevent potential diseases transmitted by insects. Native Americans have another name for echinacea, "Snakeroot", suggesting the plants ability to neutralize and eliminate poisons from the body.



### Mosquitoes

Mosquitoes are carriers of many viral and bacterial diseases therefore it makes sense to take precautions to avoid getting stung. Protect yourself with the aforementioned Personal Insect Repellent Oil. If you've been stung, apply lavender essential oil (neat) on the affected area (I always carry a small bottle of lavender essential in my purse). If you have been stung over a large area mix one cup of apple cider vinegar with 10 drops of lavender essential oil and 5 drops of thyme essential. Put this mixture in a bath (or partial bath for hands or feet) and bathe for about 20 minutes.



### Ants

Feet and ankles are a prime target for mosquitoes, ants, flies and other little creatures. Cover the ankles with cotton socks and put two drops of either lavender, lemongrass or catnip essential oil on top of your sock. This is simple and effective. Alternatively, put the drops of essential oil on the bottom of your pants.

### Citronella

Citronella is known to be an effective insect repellent as well. A friend of mine, who enjoys camping, told me that he never uses citronella out in the woods, because citronella attracts bears!!! I have yet to find proof of this, but it's better to be safe than sorry!