



Mosquitoes can be a significant nuisance and are known to be carriers of numerous diseases.

**This leaflet aims to give some basic guidelines on how to prevent the proliferation of mosquitoes and also how to avoid being bitten.**

In particular it provides you with information on how to recognise the Asian tiger mosquito (*Aedes albopictus*) which has recently been found in Malta.



Photo: <http://www.comune.torino.it/ucstampa/2005/aedes-albopictus.jpg>

## How to prevent the proliferation of mosquitoes:

All mosquitoes need water in order to reproduce. Each female mosquito may lay as many as 200 eggs that will transform into larvae, and then into mosquitoes after approximately 7 days.

Therefore the control of this mosquito begins with destroying the places where they lay their eggs which are never far from where people are being bitten.

- Remove any water-filled containers like flower plates, old buckets, food containers and tires.
- Keep mosquitoes from breeding in bird baths, pet water dishes and paddling pools by emptying them at least every 3 days.
- Any puddles, inlets to sewers and drainage systems should be drained not to allow water to stagnate for more than 3 days.
- Gutters should be kept clean of fallen leaves and other debris so that water does not collect in them.
- Flower pots and standing flower vases found outside that can collect water should be filled with sand or fine gravel.
- Man-made outdoor water features, especially fish ponds, should contain fish such as carp or killifish as these are known to feed on the mosquito's immature stages.
- Litter can also hold rain water and should be removed. This includes abandoned cars, old machinery and other junk in vacant areas.
- Any standing water in pools, catchment basins, etc, that cannot be drained or dumped can be periodically treated with properly labelled insecticides.
- Maintenance of swimming pools: Keep empty if not in use or regularly maintained with chlorine.
- Businesses should cover tires, store them indoors or treat them with an insecticide for control of mosquito larvae.
- In cases where fish cannot be kept open water reservoirs or wells need to be covered.

## How to recognise Asian Tiger mosquito:

The mosquito:

- *Aedes albopictus* or Asian tiger mosquito is a small mosquito, approximately 2-10mm, in length with a striking black and white pattern.
- It has a characteristic white line across the middle, on its thorax, while its legs are clearly striped in black and white.
- The Asian tiger mosquito typically flies and feeds in the daytime, in addition to at dusk and dawn.
- It bites during the day, and especially at the beginning of the day and at the end of the afternoon, which differentiates it from other mosquitoes which are essentially nocturnal.
- Since they have a short flight range (less than 200m) breeding sites are likely to be close to where this mosquito is found.
- These mosquitoes have a rapid bite that allows them to escape most attempts by people to swat them.
- It lives close to houses where the best conditions for reproduction usually lie.

