

WHAT'S GOING AROUND

Bug bites get serious this time of year

Posted: July 20, 2009 05:20 PM EDT

Updated: July 20, 2009 05:20 PM EDT By Ashley Swann

Posted by Phil Riggan

RICHMOND, VA (WWBT) - They're a common summer time nuisance, but, some bug bites can be more serious than you'd think.

From candles & torches, to smelly sprays -- we try everything to keep them at bay. This week, bug bites are what's going around.

"We're seeing lots of insect bites this summer, which is typical of every summer," said Dr. Elizabeth Jenkins of Patient First's Chester Center.

In fact, most of us are so used to dealing with bug bites that you may not take them very seriously. True, they are easy to treat with a hydrocortizone cream or spray.

But Dr. Jenkins says bugs -- like ticks & mosquitoes -- can carry disease. That's why it's important to check for unusual swelling, rash or fever. And, believe it or not, Dr. Jenkins says anyone exposed to bug bites should have an up to date tetanus vaccine.

"Insects are dirty animals, so you can actually get tetanus from an infected insect bite, just as you could from a rusty nail or any other injury," she said. 'So if you get bit by an insect, and your tetanus isn't up to date, come in & we'll be happy to update that for you."

Bee and wasp stings are also common right now. Those are easily treatable with over the counter medicines like Motrin and Benadryl -- but Dr. Jenkins reminds you to watch out for allergic reactions.

To stay bug bite-free, she recommends we all wear appropriate clothing while outside & keep the bug spray handy.

(c) 2009. WWBT, Inc. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.