

## The tiger mosquito (*Aedes albopictus*)



This stinging insect is particularly dangerous, as it is a carrier of several severe illnesses. Thus it is necessary to better know it in order to protect oneself from it.

### **Description**

One recognizes the tiger mosquito by its lengthways white line in a central position on its black thorax. You can see this line with your eye. It is named after the stripes on its feet.

### **Location**

It is an arthropod originating from Southeast Asia. Up to now it has invaded more than 100 countries and is now also present in France, where it is spreading very quickly. Starting from Corsica and the Mediterranean coast it reached the Lower Rhine in July 2014. Only a few departments are still free of this mosquito. It has migrated from the tropical zone in Southeast Asia towards our temperate zone thanks to the transport of goods and people. It is taking advantage of the climate change favouring its location and proliferation in our country. Heat and humidity are favourable conditions. You can now find the tiger mosquito in nearly all the European countries North and East of France.

### **Reproduction**

This insect develops particularly well in urban zones. The female lays eggs in stagnant water in all the areas where people live: pots, vases, saucers, boxes and also all kinds of recipients which can be found around our houses, on our balconies and in our gardens. Each one is an ideal location to lay eggs for this stinging insect which is very aggressive.

The female lays approximately 75 eggs every 3 to 4 days, when the temperature is ideal (25 until 30°C). At these temperatures, the females live for approximately thirty days.

### **Behaviour**

The tiger mosquito is especially aggressive at the beginning and at the end of the day: at sunrise and sunset. It is the female that stings, when it has been impregnated in order to feed its progeny. It stings all mammals and birds, but it likes humans best in order to get their blood, which is rich with proteins. It infects its victims by its saliva which contains a liquefying product.

### **Diseases passed on by the tiger mosquito**

Are concerned particularly severe tropical diseases:

- Chikungunya
- Breakbone fever
- Saint Louis meningitis

### **Advice to stop the increase**

It is compulsory to suppress all possible locations for the female to lay eggs at home. Never conserve stagnant water. Think to regularly replace the watering water in your vases, saucers, flowerpots. Be aware not to water the plants too extensively. Check the puddles after rain.

There exist numerous locations that conserve water for several days: please do check all the tubs and waste that can be found around your home and in your garden.

Cover tubs and pools. If necessary add some javel or chlorine.

Look after your garden: brushwood or piles of branches are as many locations for this fearful insect to lay eggs.

### **Control against the tiger mosquito**

The researchers think that the best means to reduce the population of this mosquito is to try to sterilise the males. By radiation and gen modification they sterilise millions of males which are then released into nature. They copulate with the females at the disadvantage of the wild males. This research is done on the Reunion Island and in Italy. Let us hope that they will be successful.

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