

# Everything You Need to Know about Biting Midges

## What are a biting midges?

Biting midges are tiny flies found around the world, including parts of the United States. They are less than an eighth of an inch long and are often called “no-see-ums.” They make mosquitoes look giant by comparison, but they can take a big bite out of your health.



## Where do biting midges live?

Biting midges can be found throughout the Western Hemisphere.

- They live and lay their eggs in areas near where people live, work, and enjoy the outdoors.
- They thrive in woodland areas and live in damp soil, holes in trees, under decaying plants, and in wet, muddy, or mossy environments.

## Why do I need to know about biting midges?

- Some types of biting midges can spread Oropouche virus through their bites. Outbreaks of Oropouche virus disease have been reported in several countries in South America and the Caribbean.
- Oropouche is not spreading in the United States, but some travelers were diagnosed with Oropouche after their trip.
- Travelers to [affected areas](#) should protect themselves from bug bites.

## How do I protect myself?

- If you are in an area with an outbreak of Oropouche, the best way to protect yourself from Oropouche is to prevent bites from biting midges and mosquitoes.
- Wear EPA-registered insect repellent when outdoors.
- Treat clothing and gear with [Permethrin](#) to prevent insect bites.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors.
- Use fans to blow biting midges away while spending time outside.



Visit [cdc.gov/oropouche](https://cdc.gov/oropouche) for more information.