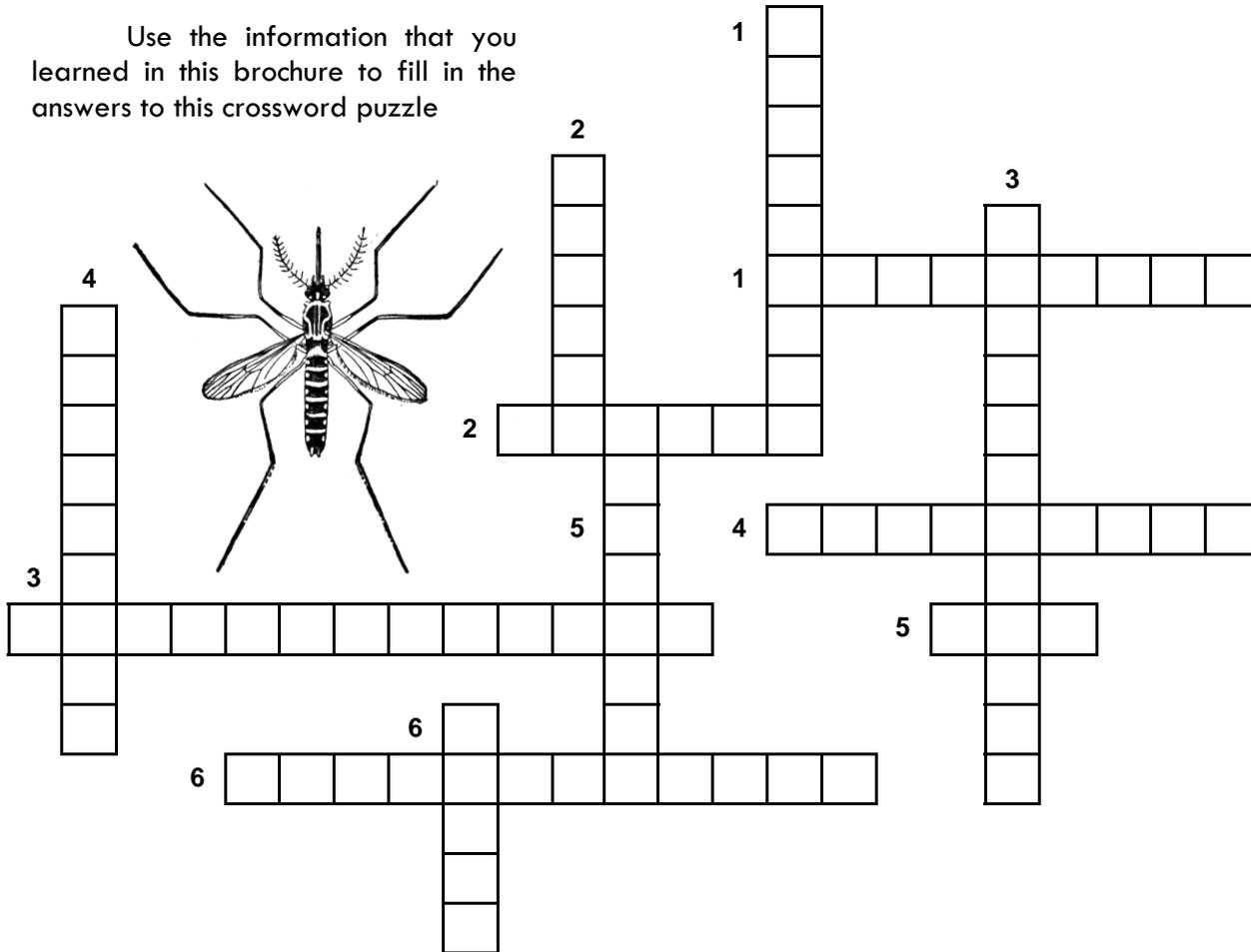


## Mosquito Crossword Puzzle

Use the information that you learned in this brochure to fill in the answers to this crossword puzzle



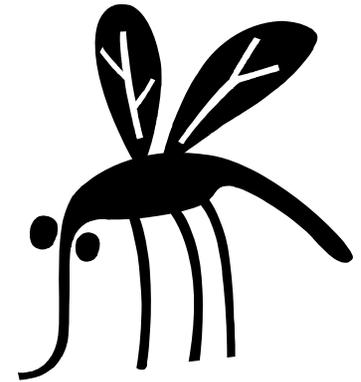
Down

Across

1. Way up north where mosquitoes don't live
2. The name for baby mosquitoes
3. A scientist that tests mosquito sprays
4. Food a female mosquito takes when she bites you
5. A flying insect that can bite people and animals
6. The name of the mosquito's growth stage right before it becomes an adult

1. The name of the mosquito's mouth part that sucks blood
2. The gender of the mosquito that can bite you
3. A disease transmitted by mosquitoes
4. A chemical that is good at keeping mosquitoes away
5. The name of the first stage in a mosquito's life cycle
6. A fish that is used to help control mosquitoes

# What is a Mosquito?



## A learning tool for KIDS

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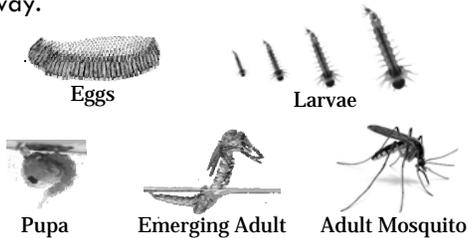
## What is a Mosquito?

Mosquitoes are small flying insects that can bite people and animals. Only the female mosquito bites. When she bites, she sucks blood from under your skin and into her stomach. She can do this because she has a special kind of mouth, called a proboscis, that works like a soda straw. It is as sharp as a needle!

When she finishes feeding and flies away, an itchy bump will be left where she bit you. Mosquitoes live in almost every part of the world, except where it gets very cold, such as the north and south poles.

## Why Do Mosquitoes Bite?

The blood that a mosquito takes when she bites is called a bloodmeal. She needs the nutritious protein in the blood to help develop her eggs. When she is ready, she will lay her eggs on top of mud or damp soil. Eggs may be laid in groups of about 150 or sometimes one egg at a time. In a few days, they hatch into baby mosquitoes called larvae. The larvae grow through four stages before becoming pupae. After another day or so, the pupae grow into adult mosquitoes. You may have learned about the way a butterfly develops from an egg, to a caterpillar, a chrysalis and finally to an adult butterfly with wings. Mosquitoes develop in a similar way.



The male mosquito likes to feed on the nectar and pollen of flowers. You will not see them feeding during the day along with the honeybees, because they feed in the middle of the night!

## Why Control Mosquitoes?

If you ask your friends, most of them will say they have been bitten by a mosquito. Biting mosquitoes cause itchy bumps, but they can also spread diseases to people and animals. Some of the diseases they spread that can make us sick are west Nile virus, western equine encephalitis and malaria. In some parts of the world these diseases cause very serious problems.

## Who Controls Mosquitoes ?

In Sutter and Yuba Counties, the Sutter-Yuba Mosquito and Vector Control District is the agency responsible for mosquito control. Employees of the district work to control mosquitoes around homes, neighborhoods, pastures, agricultural areas, duck clubs and wildlife areas. There are over 50 mosquito control districts in California and even more in the United States. Some countries on other continents have organized mosquito control, such as Africa, Europe, Asia and Australia. Some of the same species of mosquitoes that live here also live in other parts of the world!

## How are Mosquitoes Controlled?

The people that work in mosquito control are specially trained technicians. These technicians can make use of airplanes to spray big areas or ground trucks for smaller areas or neighborhoods. They plant mosquitofish in ponds and ditches to eat the mosquito larvae living there. They can also come to your house to find and kill adult mosquitoes or mosquito larvae. They use environmentally friendly sprays to kill adult mosquitoes. To kill mosquito larvae, they might dump out standing water or add some mosquitofish. Also, they could treat the water with a safe chemical specific for controlling mosquito larvae.

## Are Mosquito Sprays Safe?

The sprays used to control mosquitoes in the United States and California have been tested by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and are safe to use. Scientists, called toxicologists, do special tests and experiments to make sure that the mosquito sprays kill mosquitoes, but are safe when properly used around people and animals. This is an important job and is taken very seriously.

## Can I Stop Biting Mosquitoes?

If you are being bitten by mosquitoes, put on long pants, a long-sleeved shirt and shoes with socks. Mosquito repellants can be bought at the store and are very good at keeping mosquitoes away. Always have an adult help you put repellant on. Follow all the label directions.

If you already have itchy mosquito bites, do not scratch them! This will make them become sore and infected. Try placing a piece of ice on the bite. This will help dull the itching. If you do scratch the bite, use your knuckles, not your fingernails, so you don't break the skin. Fingernails are sharp and sometimes dirty!

## How Can I Help?

Check for and drain standing water from containers in your yard. Flush out pet dishes and bird baths every few days and fill them with fresh water. Keep wading pools, spas and swimming pools clean and fresh. Mosquitoes can develop in almost anything that can hold water— even rain gutters, piles of old tires and holes inside trees. Repair tears in window screens. Trim plants and shrubs away from the sides of your home. Mosquitoes like to hide in shady, cool places during the hottest part of the day. If you need help or have questions, talk to an adult or call your local mosquito control district.