



Northeast District Department of Health

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FACT SHEET Domestic House Flies or "Summer Filth Flies"



FAST FACTS:

- Life cycle from egg to adult is from 7-14 days
- Life span of an adult female is 3-4 weeks
- Flight range is 2 - 20 miles
- Flies breed in moist, high organic materials (manure, compost, rotting garbage, straw or mulch, etc.)
- Flies can spread disease, so take these tips to minimize your exposure:

Prevention*

Sanitation is the most important and effective measure in controlling flies.

- Plastic bags containing garbage should be tied tightly before being placed in receptacles or dumpsters to reduce attractive odors. Routinely clean garbage containers to remove food debris and further reduce odors. Use garbage cans with tightly fitting lids, and place the cans as far away as possible from the home.
- Remove all potential larval food materials such as animal manure, rotting mulch, lawn clippings, and animal or bird carcasses.
- If animals or birds become trapped behind walls or in places that are difficult to access inside the home, removal is not always possible, and the only practical solution is to let flies complete their life cycle and go away on their own.
- Compost piles, if not properly maintained, may also produce large numbers of flies. If this is the case, eliminate the compost pile or cover it with black plastic sheeting, which will trap heat and reduce fly survival.
- Use bug lights outdoors and close-fitting 14 to 16-mesh screens on doors and windows to exclude flies from homes. Once inside, a simple flyswatter is effective against small numbers of flies. Sticky flypaper rolls can be used to trap flies. Hang flypaper out of reach of children and pets.
- Make sure that all food is covered and stored properly.
- Insecticides may be used as a supplement to sanitation and exclusion. Although they are not effective in long term control, they can be used to temporarily reduce fly numbers. Use EPA-approved insecticides with great care and follow all instructions by the manufacturer. Be sure that the product is labeled for the site you intend to treat!

* This information was utilized from the Ohio State University Extension Office and can be found at:
<http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/2000/2111.html>