

HYGIENE, CLEANLINESS and COMFORT

Hygiene in the Camp Kitchen

One of the greatest health risks in the bush is illness caused by poor hygiene. We have a camp rule that we never touch food or eating utensils without washing our hands.

We have a pump-action bottle of waterless hand-wash and keep it near the food prep area. We have another bottle in a pocket of the hold-all between the car seats and a small flip-top bottle in each toilet kit.

We use disposable dish cloths as they dry out quickly after use and can be burnt or thrown in the bin after a couple of uses. Tea towels are laundered as normal with a capful of disinfectant added to the washing water.

Chopping boards are wiped down with anti-bacterial spray after each use and are left to dry thoroughly before packing away.

Personal Hygiene (when water is in short supply)

There's nothing quite like a shower at the end of a hot day in the dusty Outback, but when water supplies are scarce, conserving water for drinking becomes much more important.

That doesn't mean that you have to be smelly. A full body wipe down with baby wipes combined with a very small bowl of mildly soapy water is all that's required to keep clean.

Hair washing is usually left until a shower is available and is the only real complaint most of the girls have when they can't shower, but it's not all that bad. We take a dip whenever the opportunity arises.

Sunburn



Spending more time outdoors means that you need to protect your skin from burning. Apply a 30+ protection sunscreen and re-apply regularly. Look for sunscreen that dries on your skin after rubbing in and doesn't make you feel sticky – that's important in a hot, humid climate. Skin can be further protected by wearing UV protection clothing - available from most adventure sports stores.

Wear a broad brimmed hat to keep the sun off your face and neck. A pair of good quality sunglasses will help protect your eyes.

Insect Repellent

Flies are very persistent in the outback. They're out as soon as the sun gets up in the morning and they don't go away until the sun goes down. The best deterrent we've found so far is a product called Nature's Botanical – Rosemary & Cedarwood Oils in Natural Crème. The fragrance is similar to that of Vicks VapoRub – and the flies don't like it at all. They'll still buzz around you, but if they do land on skin treated with the crème, they leave in a hurry.





We haven't had to wear fly veils since we started using it.

Dengy Fever and Ross River viruses are spread by mosquitoes and it's important to protect yourself and your family from becoming infected.

Bites from mosquitoes, sand flies and midges can be extremely itchy and irritating. Scratching can cause bites to become infected; in some cases people can have a severe allergic reaction requiring medical attention. If you do get stung by mozzies, sandflies or midges, anti-histamines (available from chemists) can provide relief. Anti-histamine tablets are an essential first aid kit inclusion.

A non-drug insect-bite treatment is the 'Mosquito Click'. We've had success using one for mosquito and sand fly bites. They're also available from chemists for around \$20.

RID (roll on, pump or aerosol spray) and Bushman's Water Resistant (80% DEET Heavy Duty) personal insect repellents are effective against biting insects, mosquitoes, sandflies, midges, ticks, leeches and marchflies.



Apply repellent *before* you get bitten, even if you think there's no need to.

Pack a can of insecticide and spray it inside your tent before you go to bed each night. Make sure to keep your tent 'door' zipped closed as much as possible.