

# Military Developing Uniform Repellent to Replace Permethrin

As part of the Pentagon's second annual "Bug Week," an event organized to raise awareness of insects and the diseases they carry, the Defense Department announced its plans to develop a new and improved product that will eventually replace permethrin, the repellent and insecticide currently used to soak most military combat uniforms to protect against insect bites and stings.



Officials were unable to disclose many details about the new product, which is undergoing testing and evaluation, but did comment that the new treatment could potentially be used at a lower level of toxicity, and can possibly last the entire length of a uniform's lifetime, an improvement from permethrin's coverage which lasts only up to 50 washes.

Dr. James English, a global health specialist with the Uniformed Services University pointed out the many shortcomings of permethrin and stated, "We are working on a new chemical ... that would also include environmental factors like sweat, ultraviolet light and abrasion, so we are trying to make it last longer."

When it comes to vector-borne diseases, the Defense Department asserts that Lyme disease continues to be the top domestic threat to U.S. troops while mosquitoes and the diseases they carry are a major challenge overseas.

## References

1. Military.com. Military Eyes Bug-Repellent Coating to Replace Permethrin in Uniforms. [News Article]. Copyright 2019 Military Advantage.  
<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2019/08/02/military-eyes-bug-repellent-coating-replace-permethrin-uniforms.html>