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Natural remedies to keep the mozzies at bay

By D. KANYAKUMARI
kanyakumari@thestar.com.my

PETALING JAYA: In addition to the commercial chemical repellents, Malaysians have also turned to natural remedies to keep mosquitoes at bay.

Some of these remedies include growing certain plants in the garden and using essential oils.

The Forest Research Institute of Malaysia had suggested that shrubs served as a natural insect screen.

Local plants such as *serai wangi* (*Cymbopogon nardus*) and *limau purut* (*Citrus hystrix*) are apparently effective as both produce citronella, which is an important phyto-chemical ingredient in mosquito repellent.

The Selangor government has also advised people to grow holy basil, also known as *thulasi*, which is an effective mosquito repellent.

Natural citronella essential oil, lavender oil and tea-tree oil as well as lemon eucalyptus oil have also been suggested as alternatives.

Some people also suggested wearing light-coloured clothing and reducing beer consumption as mos-

quitoes are attracted to high body temperatures.

The consumption of garlic and ginger is also said to be an effective method to prevent mosquito bites.

On Thursday, the Health Ministry confirmed the first Zika case in Malaysia.

The patient, a 58-year old woman from Klang, apparently contracted it in Singapore when she went to

visit her daughter who was infected with the virus.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam had announced that the *Aedes* mosquitoes were carriers of the virus and called for Malaysians to clean up possible breeding spots.

Those experiencing symptoms were asked to seek medical help immediately.