

Tick Prevention and Removal



In the United States, many ticks carry pathogens that can cause human disease through the process of feeding. Lyme disease is the most recognized of the tick-borne illnesses. Ticks find their hosts by detecting animals' breath and body odors, or by sensing body heat, moisture, or vibrations. Ticks are unable to fly or jump, so they typically wait for a host by resting on the tips of grasses and shrubs.

Many tick-borne diseases can have similar signs and symptoms, including fever, chills, aches and pains, fatigue, swollen lymph nodes, and rashes. In cases of Lyme disease, approximately 70-80% of infected individuals experience a circular rash called erythema migrans (EM), which typically appears within 3-30 days and before the onset of fever. If you develop any signs or symptoms of a tick-borne illness, seek medical attention promptly. Be sure to inform your health care provider if you work outdoors in an area where ticks may be present.



Steps to Prevent Tick Bites:

- Wear light-colored clothing. Protect your body by wearing a hat, long-sleeve shirt, and long pants that have been tucked into your socks or boots. Densely woven or mesh clothing can also create a stronger barrier.
- Use appropriate insect repellents that provide protection for the amount of time you will be outdoors, and be sure to:
 - Follow repellent label directions for use.
 - Use repellents containing DEET on your skin or clothing. Do not apply DEET to synthetic fabrics such as rayon or plastics, as it can damage these products.
 - Reapply repellents as needed.
- Conduct a full-body tick check every single day, and be sure to check all equipment and clothing as well. Be thorough, and don't forget to check areas such as your hair, underarms, and groin. The immature forms of these ticks are very small and may be very difficult to see, so be sure to examine closely.
- Immediately remove ticks from your body using fine-tipped tweezers. Removing infected ticks within 24 hours reduces your risk of being infected with the Lyme disease bacterium.
- Wash your work clothes and dry them in a dryer on high heat for an hour to kill any remaining ticks.

Safely Remove a Tick

- When you identify a tick, stay calm!
- Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.
- Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk the tick; this can cause the mouth-parts to break off and remain in the skin. If this occurs, remove the mouth-parts with tweezers. If you are unable to remove the mouth easily with clean tweezers, leave it alone and let the skin heal.
- After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub, or soap and water.
- Dispose of a live tick by submersing it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed bag/container, wrapping it tightly in tape, or flushing it down the toilet. Never crush a tick with your fingers.
- Avoid alternate remedies that include applying nail polish, petroleum jelly, or heat to make the tick detach from the skin. The goal is to remove the tick before infection is spread.

