

Tick Talk

Your Guide to Tick Safety



Larva



Nymph



Adult Male



Adult Female

Deer Tick



Larva



Nymph



Adult Male



Adult Female

Dog Tick

General Information



Ticks like to live in shady, humid, and leafy areas. They are often found in gardens, yard border areas, wood piles, wooded areas and along forest trails. Deer ticks (Lyme Disease carriers) reside on the tips of grass and leaves enabling them to crawl directly onto the skin or fur of a passing host.

To keep tick population low in your yard, follow these guidelines:

- Remove leaf litter.
- Clear tall grasses and brush around homes and at the edge of lawns.
- Mow the lawn frequently.
- Stack wood neatly and in a dry area (discourages rodents).
- Keep playground equipment, decks, and patios away from yard edges and trees.
- Discourage unwelcome animals (such as deer and raccoons) from entering your yard by constructing fences.

Tick Prevention

- Wear **light-colored clothing**. Light colors make ticks easier to spot.
- Tuck your **pants inside your socks**.
- Use **insect repellent**.

Most of the chemicals that repel mosquitoes are somewhat effective against ticks, although it may take a heavier concentration of DEET (up to 30%) to really keep them away. Permethrin is a stronger chemical that kills ticks as well as repels them. **Products containing permethrin should be sprayed on clothes, not on the skin and instructions should always be followed when applying such products.*

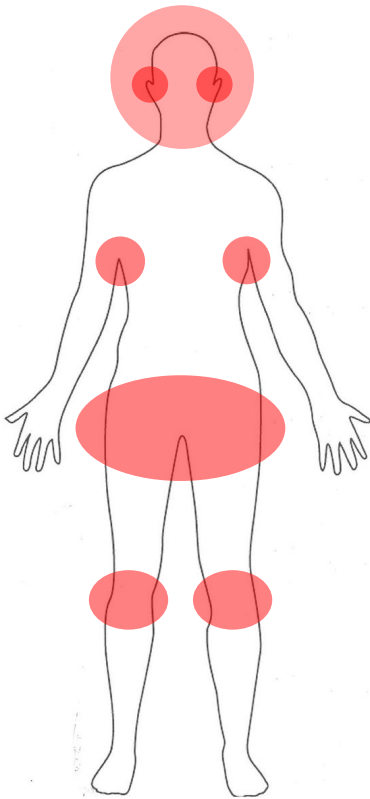
- Stay in the **middle of the path**.
- Think **sunny**. Ticks don't do well in dry, sunny, open areas, like the middle of the lawn.
- **Inspect yourself and your children (and your pets)**, especially the legs and groin.

Ticks usually get picked up on the lower legs and then climb upward in search of a meal. The odds of contracting Lyme or other tick-borne disease are minimized if a tick is removed soon after it's attached, and there's no risk if it's still crawling around. The shower is a good place to conduct a tick check. Feel for any new bumps on soaped-up skin.



Larva, nymph, female, and male deer ticks

Red Zones



When checking for ticks, feel for bumps and look for tiny brown spots. Be sure to double-check yourself in the **RED ZONES!**

- Under the arms
- In and around the ears
- Inside belly button
- Back of the knees
- In and around the hair
- Between the legs
- Around the waist

What To Do If You Find An Attached Tick

If you find a tick attached to your skin, don't panic. If a tick is found and removed within 36 hours the risk of Lyme infection is very low. There are several tick removal devices on the market, but a plain set of fine-tipped tweezers will remove a tick quite effectively.



Image credit: http://www.cdc.gov/ticks/removing_a_tick.html

1. **Use fine-tipped tweezers** to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.
2. **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 happens, 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.
3. **After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite and your hands with rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub, or soap and water.** Save the tick in rubbing alcohol if you would like it further identified. Talk to your healthcare provider about bringing the tick into the office for identification.

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.

Tick-Bite Follow-up



Image credit: <http://www.cdc.gov/ticks/symptoms.html>

If you develop a rash or fever within several weeks of removing a tick, or if a tick has been attached for over 24 hours, *call your healthcare provider*. Be sure to tell them about your recent tick bite, when the bite occurred, and where you most likely acquired the tick.

Typical Lyme symptoms include fever, headache, joint pain and swelling, fatigue, and/or the characteristic bulls-eye skin rash.

Most cases of Lyme disease can be treated successfully with just a few weeks of antibiotics. Children are unlikely to have persistent symptoms after a course of treatment for Lyme.

