

Tickborne Illness



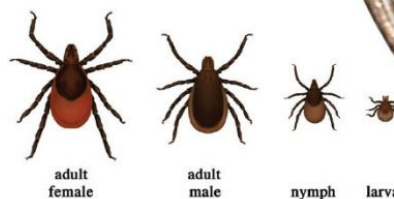
As the climate becomes warmer, ticks' ranges have spread northward, and the tick season has lengthened in many regions. Learn what you can do to stay safe.

Diseases spread by tick bites

- **Lyme Disease** - About 30,000 people are infected each year in the United States. Symptoms can include a bulls-eye rash, fever, chills, headache, and fatigue -- and later, joint pain and neurological problems. People treated early usually recover rapidly and completely. However, up to 20 percent of Lyme disease causes long-lasting symptoms.
- **Rocky Mountain spotted fever (RMSF)** - symptoms include a fever, headache, upset stomach, and a rash.
- **Babesiosis** - a parasitic infection that infects red blood cells. Symptoms include flu-like symptoms and anemia.
- **Other diseases** include Anaplasmosis, Colorado tick fever, STARI, and more.

Ticks That Commonly Bite Humans

Blacklegged Tick (*Ixodes scapularis*)



Lone Star Tick (*Amblyomma americanum*)



Dog Tick (*Dermacentor variabilis*)



NOTE: Relative sizes of several ticks at different life stages.

Engorged female *Ixodes scapularis* tick. Color may vary.



Blacklegged ticks are the only ticks known to carry Lyme disease. However, other ticks can carry other diseases.

(Image from: <https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/tickbornediseases/images/tick-life-stages-medium.jpg>)



How to stay safe around ticks

Prevent bites

Before you go outside...

- **Know where they hide.** Ticks thrive in grass, brush, or wooded areas. They can also live on animals.
- **Use bug spray** with DEET, picaridin, IR3535, OLE, or PMD.
- **Wear proper clothing** including long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and socks. Consider treating clothes and gear with clothing spray.
- **Watch where you walk.** Stay on trails and avoid tall grass, leaf litter, and wooded areas.
- **Keep a tidy yard.** Mow grass short and clear away leaves and brush.

When you come back in...

- **Check clothing for ticks.** Wash with hot water OR dry for 10 minutes on high heat.
- **Check gear and pets.**
- **Shower soon after** to wash off unattached ticks.
- **Check your body for ticks,** including armpits, in and around ears, belly button, back of knees, in and around hair, between the legs, and waist.

Remove ticks

- Don't panic! Ticks caught early are less likely to spread disease.
- Use fine-tipped tweezers. Grasp the tick as close to your skin as possible.
- Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk the tick.
- Clean the bite and your hands with rubbing alcohol or soap and water.
- Flush the tick down the toilet, or place in a sealed bag or in alcohol. Don't crush a tick with your fingers.
- Don't use petroleum jelly, nail polish, or heat on the tick.

Check symptoms

- Consider calling your doctor if you live in a place where Lyme disease is common, regardless of symptoms.
- Call your doctor if you get a rash, fever, fatigue, headache, muscle pain, or joint swelling and pain within 30 days after a bite or suspected tick exposure. See your doctor even if symptoms disappear, because the disease is not necessarily gone.
- A bulls-eye rash (a circular rash with a clear center) is a common symptom of Lyme disease and STARI. Other types of rashes may also occur.