



Keep yourself tick-free

Summer is the time for outdoor fun! Unfortunately, it's also the time of year for tick activity. Taking a few minutes to check for ticks after being outdoors can save you from future health problems.

Before You Go Outdoors

Know where to expect ticks. Ticks live in grassy, brushy, or wooded areas, and even on animals. Walking your dog, camping, gardening, or hunting could bring you in close contact with ticks. It's best to walk in the center of trails and avoid wooded, brushy areas with high grass and leaf litter.

Treat clothing and gear with products containing 0.5% permethrin. Permethrin can be used to treat boots, clothing and camping gear and remains protective through several washings.

Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (OLE), para-menthane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone.

After You Come Indoors

Check your clothing. Ticks may be carried into the house on clothing and should be removed. To be sure you've caught them all, tumble dry clothes in a dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks. If the clothes require washing first, hot water is recommended since cold and medium temperature water will not kill ticks.

Shower soon after being outdoors. Showering within two hours of coming indoors has been shown to reduce your risk of getting Lyme disease and may be effective in reducing the risk of other tickborne diseases. Showering may help wash off unattached ticks and it is a good opportunity to do a tick check.

Check your body for ticks after being outdoors.

Conduct a full body check upon return from potentially tick-infested areas, including your own backyard. Use a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body. In particular, check these parts of your body and your child's body for ticks:

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

Examine gear and pets. Ticks can ride into the home on clothing and pets, then attach to a person later, so carefully examine pets, coats, and daypacks.

If you do find a tick on yourself, a family member, or a pet, remove it immediately. The quickest way to remove a tick is with tweezers. Grasp the tick between the head of the tick and the skin and to pull firmly but gently away.

The most important point is to remove the tick quickly. Removing a tick in the first 24 hours dramatically reduces the risk of Lyme disease.

Adapted from [CDC](#)



Ixodes scapularis (Blacklegged ticks or Deer tick)
www.tickencounter.org

Keeping your home and yard a tick-free zone

If you're out hiking or camping, there's only so much you can do to remain tick-free—it's all about checking yourself and your belongings carefully when you're done. But there are things you can do—read below for tips to keep your home and yard tick-free.

Keep Your Lawn Well Manicured

The first principle in creating a tick-free zone is to have an inner area that is well-manicured. Lawns that are mowed often and grass that is well sheared will keep the tick habitat away from your home.

Create a Tick Barrier

To create a barrier, you'll want to separate this tick-free habitat from the woods with a barrier, such as a several-foot-wide strip of wood chips or bark that separates your well-manicured yard and lawn from the brush and taller grasses that may be at the perimeter of your yard.

Eliminate Mice

Ticks get Lyme disease from mice. Eliminate the mouse habitats around your yard including wood piles and rock piles where mice tend to live and breed.

Protect Your Garden

Gardeners should also try to keep deer, a common host for ticks, out of their tick-free zone. This can be accomplished with an eight-foot deer fence, and can be installed by professionals or yourself.

Adapted from [Johns Hopkins](#)

Signs and symptoms of Lyme disease

Even if you're very careful, it's still possible to get a tick bite. But it's important to know what to do afterwards, and be aware of the symptoms of Lyme disease, the most common tick-borne illness.

Early Signs and Symptoms

A small, red bump often appears at the site of a tick bite or tick removal and goes away over a few days. This is normal after a tick bite and does not indicate Lyme disease. However, watch for these signs and symptoms that may occur within a month after you've been infected:

- **Rash.** This is the most well-known symptom of Lyme disease. From 3 to 30 days after an infected tick bite, an expanding red area might appear that sometimes clears in the center, forming a bull's-eye pattern. The rash expands slowly over days and can spread to 12 inches across. It is typically not itchy or painful. A rash can form on more than one place of your body.
- **Flu-like symptoms.** Fever, chills, fatigue, body aches and a headache may accompany the rash.

Later Signs and Symptoms

If untreated, new signs and symptoms of Lyme infection might appear in the following weeks to months, including:

- **The bull's eye rash** appearing in other areas of your body.
- **Joint pain.** Bouts of severe joint pain and swelling are especially likely to affect your knees, but the pain can shift from one joint to another.
- **Neurological problems.** Weeks, months or even years after infection, you might develop meningitis, Bell's palsy, numbness or weakness in your limbs, and impaired muscle movement.



Less Common Signs and Symptoms

Several weeks after infection, some people develop:

- Heart problems, such as an irregular heartbeat. Heart problems rarely last more than a few days or weeks.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Diffuse rashes.
- Eye inflammation.
- Liver inflammation (hepatitis).
- Severe fatigue.

Only a minority of blacklegged tick bites leads to Lyme disease. The longer the tick remains attached to your skin, the greater your risk of getting the disease. Lyme infection is unlikely if the tick is attached for less than 36 to 48 hours.

See Your Doctor Even if Symptoms Disappear

It's important to consult your doctor even if signs and symptoms disappear—the absence of symptoms doesn't mean the disease is gone. Left untreated, Lyme disease can spread to other parts of your body from several months to years after infection, causing arthritis and nervous system problems. Ticks also can transmit other illnesses, such as babesiosis and Colorado tick fever.

Adapted from [The Mayo Clinic](http://www.mayoclinic.org)



Recipe of the Month:

Raspberry Ricotta Dip

This fresh and fruity recipe is super easy to whip up and makes a great addition to a summer fruit platter. Use as a dip for fresh fruit or spread on toast, muffins or crostini. Because part-skim ricotta cheese has about half the fat and calories of cream cheese, it makes a healthy base for this simple raspberry dip recipe. Lighten it up by using fat-free ricotta cheese.

Ingredients

1 cup part-skim ricotta cheese
3 tablespoons plain yogurt
3 tablespoons raspberry jam
1/4 tsp. vanilla extract
2/3 cup (approximately 3 ounces)
raspberries

Instructions

Blend ricotta, yogurt, jam and vanilla with a wire whisk until smooth. Stir in raspberries to blend, leaving some pieces of berries visible. Transfer to a covered container and refrigerate until well chilled.

Use as a dip for sliced bananas, apples or peaches, or spread on bagels, bruschetta or whole grain muffins.

Nutrition per serving:

Calories: 39; Fat: 1.39 g;
Saturated Fat: .84 g; Cholesterol: 5.27 mg;
Fiber: .41 g; Carbohydrates: 4.5 g;
Protein: 2.11 g; Sodium: 23 mg

Adapted from www.driscolls.com