

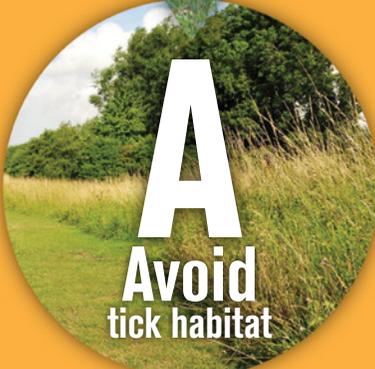
Dare to Act

Preventing Lyme & Other Diseases From Ticks





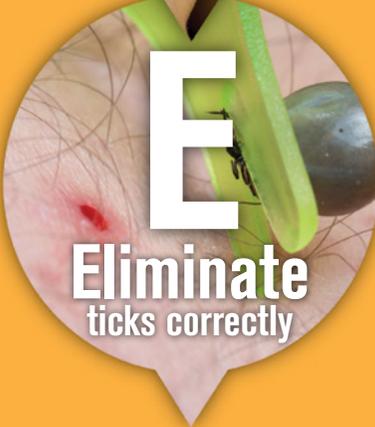
D
Defend
yourself and
property



A
Avoid
tick habitat



R
Remember
tick checks
and shower



E
Eliminate
ticks correctly

Pennsylvania is at the center of the Lyme disease epidemic. Lyme disease is the fastest growing infectious disease spread by ticks in the country. Act 83 passed into law in 2014 establishing tick-borne disease as “a serious threat to the health and quality of life of many residents and visitors of Pennsylvania.”

Any tick bite can increase your risk of getting sick and should be taken seriously. Take action to protect yourself and prevent potential diseases that ticks carry.

Do You Know What to Do if a Tick Bites YOU?

- Do you know how to check for ticks?
- Do you know what to do if you find a tick on you?
- What should you do with the tick once removed?
- What symptoms should you look for in upcoming days, weeks, months?
- What do you do if you have symptoms?



In “Dare to Act” we outline...

- What to do after exposure to ticks.
- What to do if bitten by a tick.
- How to correctly remove a tick.
- What you need to know about the tick bite.
- Follow-up steps to prevent disease.



I don't go for walks in the woods. Why do I need to check myself, children and pets for ticks?

IF YOU ONLY TAKE ONE PREVENTATIVE STEP, take a shower within 2 hours of exposure and check for ticks.



Any time you venture outside in areas where ticks are common, there is a risk of tick and disease exposure. Ticks are in surprising places – on the way to your mailbox, in city parks, at the edge of the highway, embedded in wooden park picnic benches and in your own backyard. Of course, some outdoor activities have higher risk than others. When you do come in from being outdoors, follow this easy routine to ensure that ticks don't come in with you.

- 1. Remove clothes** – remove your clothes immediately, preferably in the garage, and leave your shoes in the garage or outside too.
- 2. Run clothes in dryer** – on HIGH HEAT for a minimum of 10 minutes. Per the CDC (Centers for Disease Control), the high heat will kill the ticks that may be clinging to your clothing. *NOTE: washing clothing first will not kill ticks, nor will they drown or die from the hot water.*
- 3. Shower** – within 2 hours of potential exposure. Showering immediately upon coming indoors will help wash off any loose ticks, especially in your hair. *Note: once attached, ticks do not wash off in the shower.*
- 4. Tick check** – and check again! Do a thorough tick check while in the shower and afterwards to ensure you are tick-free.



REMEMBER YOUR TICK CHECKS!

Doing routine tick checks is critical to finding ticks before they attach. Don't forget to check your children and pets too! The sooner you check, the better. If a tick is already attached, the sooner you remove it, the less risk of disease transmission. It takes less than a minute to do body checks when you come in and at bedtime.

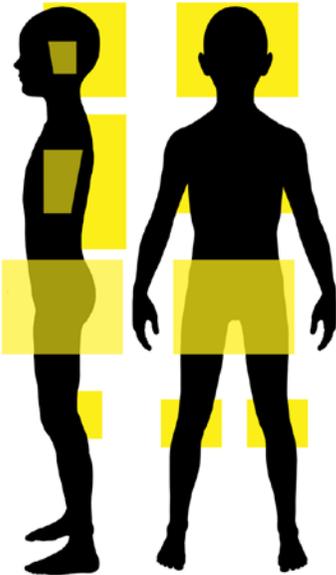
TIP:

Remember daily tick checks. Hang a "shower card" (see tickencounter.org) in shower or on bathroom mirror to do daily tick checks. Run fingers through hair, over scalp and behind ears regularly. Feel for any bumps when outdoors and in shower.

Here's a quick list of the key places to check:

- In-between toes
- Behind the knee
- In/behind ears
- Groin area
- Belly button
- Armpits
- Neck
- Scalp and hair
- Under skin folds
- Underneath watch bands and bra straps

Feel for bumps and look for tiny brown spots, especially in these areas



Blacklegged or Deer ticks



American Dog Ticks



Lone Star Ticks



Touch all freckles and moles to ensure they're not a tick. Keep in mind that nymph ticks can be as small as a grain of sand or a poppy seed. It takes a tick a few hours to find a suitable spot to attach and about 15 minutes to 2 hours to physically attach to your skin.

You will not feel the bite of a tick because they inject a painkiller at the site of attachment that numbs the skin. And due to the small size of a tick, you may not feel it crawling up your leg or arm either. **Remember, you can never do too many tick checks!**

Photo courtesy of The University of Rhode Island TickEncounter Resource Center



I FOUND A TICK ON ME! WHAT SHOULD I DO?

ACT QUICKLY!

Removing a tick as soon as you find it reduces your chance of getting sick from a disease the tick may be carrying. Most people have no idea how long a tick is attached. Some diseases can be transmitted faster than others. Remember, ticks found and removed quickly are certainly less risky than the ticks you don't look for, find or remove.

Ticks feed on blood. *Shown in the photo:* a tick that is engorged with (filled up with) blood (*right*), and a tick that is not engorged with blood. The tick that is engorged has been attached for many hours. Find ticks and remove before they attach and become engorged with your blood.

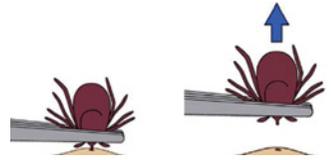


Eliminate the tick correctly!

If you find a tick on yourself, remove it promptly and correctly. Many myths exist about tick removal and some of these approaches may put your health at risk. Remove the tick as quickly as possible to reduce the chance of your getting any disease the tick may be carrying. Do not stress or squeeze the tick as this can cause the tick to push bacteria from its stomach into your body, increasing your risk of infection. **DO NOT WAIT** for the tick to detach on its own. Remove it immediately.

There are many tick removal devices on the market. Some have been studied and are effective (pointed tweezers, The ProTick Remedy™, TickCard, etc). New tools are evolving rapidly. Make sure you verify effectiveness of the tool with manufacturers before using them to remove both nymphs and adult ticks. Proper steps for tick removal follows:

STEP 1: Use pointed tweezers, or other effective tick removers, to grab the tick as close to the skin as possible. Put on latex gloves to protect any open cuts on your skin.



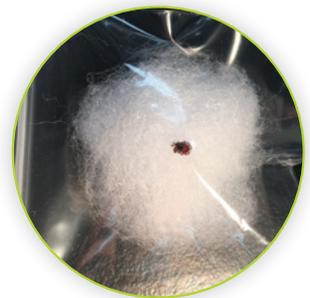
STEP 2: Slowly and steadily pull straight up with steady, even pressure. Do not twist or jerk the tick.

STEP 3: After removing the tick, thoroughly disinfect the bite area, the tweezers and your hands. Use rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub or germicidal soap and water.

STEP 4: Dispose of the detached tick by placing it in a sealed bag with a moist cotton ball (if sending for testing) or sealing it tightly in tape. Never crush a tick with your fingers or flush it down the toilet. *NOTE: tick testing labs may have specific instructions for storing and mailing in the tick to be tested (see more detailed information on following page).*

TIP: DO NOT...

"paint" the tick with petroleum jelly, rubbing alcohol or any essential oil; do not use heat to make the tick detach from the skin, or to burn it out with a match; do not squeeze or squish the tick; do not twist or jerk tick. Doing any of these may cause the tick to throw up its stomach contents, including bacteria and other disease, into your blood stream.



STEP 5: Once removed, consider sending the tick for testing to assess your risk of infection through one of several resources:

- Send a picture to Tickspotters to assess your risk before testing. It's free! www.tickencounter.org/tickspotters
- Identify the tick yourself:
 - ✦ TickEncounter: www.tickencounter.org/tick_identification
 - ✦ Tick Research Lab of PA: www.ticklab.org/tick-identification
 - ✦ PA Lyme Tick ID card: www.palyme.org/dare-2B-tick-aware.html lists what diseases the ticks may carry

STEP 6: PA has a high number of Lyme cases – it makes sense to check in with your doctor to discuss options regarding preventive treatments.

STEP 7: Contact your doctor immediately if you develop a rash or flu-like symptoms. If you do see a bulls-eye rash – that means you do have Lyme and should be treated. Taking antibiotics after a tick bite may be beneficial for some people. This would apply to deer tick bites in areas where Lyme disease is common and when the tick was feeding. In cases like this, you should discuss the possibilities with your doctor or licensed health care provider. The earlier you treat, the more likely you will recover fully.

Note that not everyone gets a bulls-eye rash. Other early symptoms include fever, fatigue, headache, stiff neck, Bell's palsy (facial drooping), swollen joints, or flu-like symptoms (chills, sweats, nausea, muscle aches). Be especially wary of any "summer" flu symptoms.



If you find an attached tick on you, there is exposure risk. Discuss treatment risks and benefits with your health care practitioner. Treating Lyme disease earlier is well known to have better outcomes. Share concerns with your health care practitioner, and evaluate your situation along with the risks and benefits carefully.



TEST THE TICK TO ASSESS RISK

Is the tick that bit you infected? Since ticks can carry multiple infections, consider sending the tick for testing to assess your risk. This can also help your doctor determine appropriate treatment. If the tick was attached to you, time is of the essence.

However, understand that a negative tick test does not rule out disease nor does a positive test indicate you've been infected. The Pennsylvania Department of Health advises:

- If the tick tests positive for disease-causing organisms, it does not necessarily mean that the bitten individual has been infected.
- If the bitten individual has been infected, they are likely to develop symptoms before results of the tick test are available. Patients with symptoms should not wait for tick testing results before beginning appropriate treatment.
- Negative results can lead to false assurance. For example, the individual may have been unknowingly bitten by a different tick that was infected.

If you experience symptoms, do not rely on just the tick testing and consult your doctor.

There are two labs in Pennsylvania that test ticks. For attached ticks, be sure to label your bagged tick with the date and time the tick was removed. New tick testing services are emerging all the time, so please visit www.palyme.org for updated information on other available tick testing resources.

TICK TESTING (free for PA residents)

Ticklab.org (Tick Research Lab of PA) is a good lab for ticks you've pulled off yourself or a pet and can provide a fast turnaround time. They provide a report that identifies the type of tick that bit you, what diseases the tick was carrying and how long it was attached.

Tick testing is more accurate than human testing, which tests for antibodies produced to fight infection, not for the presence of the bacteria itself. Most tick testing labs use a version of a "Polymerase Chain Reaction" or "PCR" test that detects specific DNA sequences of the infecting bacteria or pathogen organism.

TICK TESTING FOR RESEARCH ONLY (free)

Drexel University College of Medicine: If you found a tick that was not attached and want to support research efforts, you can send the tick to Drexel University College of Medicine, Center for Advanced Microbial Processing. This lab is not intended for clinical use and does not provide personal reports. Email ticks@drexel.edu for a submission form.

Tickcheck.com	
Test type	PCR/DNA
Accuracy	99.9%
Timeframe	24-48 hours of lab receipt guarantee
Diseases	
Lyme disease	X
Anaplasmosis	X
Babesiosis	X
Bartonellosis	X
B. miyamotoi	X
Ehrlichiosis	X
Powassan Virus	
Rocky Mountain spotted fever	X
STARI	X
Tularemia	X

PA Lyme Resource Network offers a collection of Dare 2B Tick Aware™ Lyme prevention and awareness literature.

- Tick Identification card
- PA Lyme Protection Tips card
- Dare to Prevent brochure (personal prevention)
- Dare to Prevent: Pet Prevention brochure
- Dare to Prevent: Yard Prevention brochure
- Dare to Act brochure (tick checks, what to do if you find a tick on you)
- Dare to Know brochure (early recognition of symptoms)



To learn more about prevention measures,
visit our website or social media pages.

www.palyme.org

 PA Lyme Resource Network

 @PALyme1

PA Lyme Resource Network (www.palyme.org) is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides awareness, education, support, advocacy and resources to navigate Lyme and Tick-Borne Diseases in the state of Pennsylvania. PA Lyme was founded in 2012 by individuals with personal experience with these diseases and provides educational seminars, speakers, patient networking and research updates serving the general public, medical professionals, schools, private businesses and government entities. PA Lyme has the largest network of regionally based support groups in the state. The support groups hold local meetings and events to provide support, education and resources for their local communities.

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