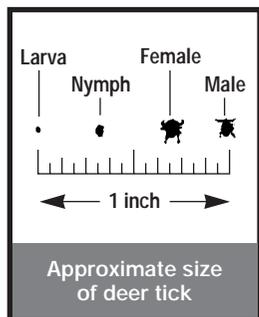


PATIENT INFORMATION



FROM
YOUR DOCTOR



Easy ways to avoid tick bites

Many infectious diseases are transmitted by ticks. Lyme disease is the best known, but others include Rocky Mountain spotted fever, ehrlichiosis, tularemia, and tick paralysis. Not all ticks carry disease, and not all that can make you sick, will.

Here are some steps you can take when you're outdoors, especially in wooded areas or grasslands. They will reduce your chances of being bitten by a tick.

Simple avoidance

- Ticks usually climb from the ground or vegetation, so it helps to avoid tall grass or thick ground cover as well as dense woods.
- In the woods or wilderness, try to stay on cleared trails, away from brush and vegetation.

What to wear

Ticks are most likely to bite in areas of warmth—at the belt line or neckline, at the tops of shoes or boots, on the scalp, or in the groin or armpits. To deny ticks the opportunity to get attached to you,

- Wear long pants tucked into long socks or boots. Or use masking tape or rubber bands to tighten the fit of the pants legs.
- Wear a long-sleeved shirt that is snug about the wrists and tucked into the waistband.
- Don't wear sandals or other open-toed shoes.
- Wear light-colored clothing to make it easier to find any ticks.

Use repellents!

- Spray a repellent containing permethrin (Permanone) on your clothes (not on your skin), if you can buy the product in your state.
- On exposed areas of skin (but not the face), use a repellent containing diethyltoluamide (DEET). Be careful when using DEET-containing repellents in children. Use them in small amounts, and follow the label directions carefully. Too much DEET can cause side effects, some of them serious.
- Ask your veterinarian about tick repellents for your pet.

Self-inspection

After you've been outdoors, especially in wooded areas or grasslands, check your body carefully for ticks twice a day. Don't forget to inspect the neck and scalp. You can use a fine-tooth comb to find ticks in your hair.

- Be aware that some ticks, including the one that transmits Lyme disease, are tiny—about the size of a poppy seed—before they are swollen with blood.
- Be sure to check your pets for ticks, too.

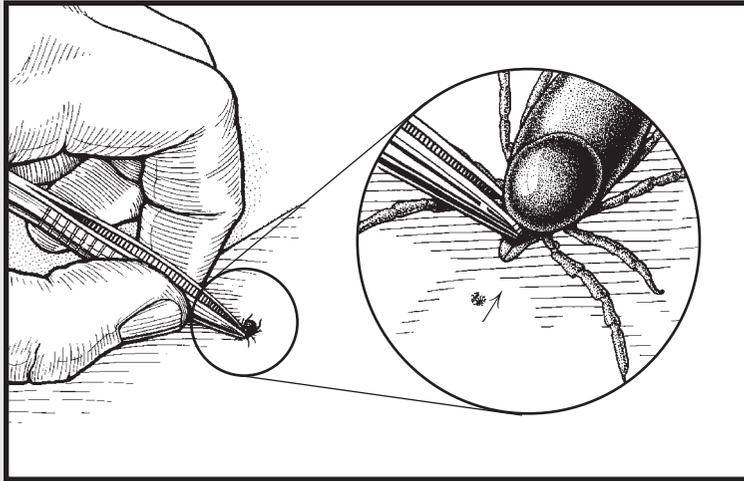
patient
care

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Easy ways to avoid tick bites

continued

How to remove ticks



Try to remove a tick before it has been attached for more than 24-36 hours. It takes that long for the tick to transfer bacteria into the bloodstream. Here's how to remove a tick that is attached to your skin:

- Grasp the tick's head parts with a pair of narrow-nose tweezers as close to the skin as possible.
- Gently and repeatedly twist the tweezers slowly and steadily, and gradually pull the tick straight up and away from the skin.
- Don't squeeze the tick with the tweezers.
- Don't try to get ticks out of your skin by burning them or coating them with anything like nail polish remover, petroleum jelly, or oil.
- Don't touch the tick or any fluid from the tick.
- Once the tick is removed, clean the area around the bite wound with an antiseptic.

What to do next

- Let your doctor know that you've been bitten by a tick or think you may have been bitten.
- Save the tick in a plastic bag. This will help the doctor learn whether the tick bite might cause infection.
- If you do not save the tick, flush it, burn it, or bury it. □