

# Ick! It's a Tick!

Here are the 3 most common ticks in Indiana that may pass on disease here in this area.

## Black Legged Tick (aka Deer tick)

Transmits Lyme disease, babesiosis, anaplasmosis, ehrlichiosis, *Borrelia miyamotoi* &

Powassan encephalitis

Immatures active late spring-early summer, adult females active early spring and again in later summer



*Ixodes scapularis* on finger. Left to right: Adult female, adult male, nymph, larva. Photo: Bryan Price, Indiana State Department of Health



*Ixodes scapularis* magnified. Left to right: Adult female, adult male, nymph, larva. Photo: Lee Green, Indiana State Department of Health.

The blacklegged tick life cycle consists of four stages (egg, larva, nymph, and adult) and usually takes two years to complete. At each stage, the tick must have a blood meal in order to molt and develop to the next stage. Both nymphs and adults can feed on humans and are capable of transmitting disease. In Indiana, nymphs are most active during spring and summer and adults are most active during the late summer and fall. However, adult ticks may be active any time winter temperatures are above freezing.

### Lone Star Tick

Transmits ehrlichiosis, tularemia, heartland virus & Southern tick-associated rash illness (STARI)

Immatures and adults are active spring-summer



Female Lone Star tick (*Amblyomma americanum*). Photo: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



Male Lone Star tick (*Amblyomma americanum*). Photo: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## American Dog Tick

Transmits Rocky Mountain spotted fever & tularemia

Adult females most likely to bite humans and are active spring-summer



Female American dog tick (*Dermacentor variabilis*). Photo: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



Female (left) and male (right) American dog ticks (*Dermacentor variabilis*). Photo: Indiana State Department of Health.

For more tick information <https://www.in.gov/health/erc/zoonotic-and-vectorborne-epidemiology-entomology/pests/>

# Preventing tick bites

<https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/avoid/index.html>

Tick exposure can occur year-round, **but ticks are most active during warmer months**

**(April-September)**

## Before You Go Outdoors

- **Know where to expect ticks.** Ticks live in grassy, brushy, or wooded areas, or even on animals. Spending time outside walking your dog, camping, gardening, or hunting could bring you in close contact with ticks. Many people get ticks in their own yard or neighborhood.
- **Treat clothing and gear** with products containing 0.5% permethrin. Permethrin can be used to treat boots, clothing and camping gear and remain protective through several washings. Alternatively, you can buy permethrin-treated clothing and gear.
- **Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents** containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (OLE), para-menthane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone. Always follow product instructions. Do not use products containing OLE or PMD on children under 3 years old.
- <https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents>
- **Avoid Contact with Ticks**
  - Avoid wooded and brushy areas with high grass and leaf litter.
  - Walk in the center of trails.

## After You Come Indoors

### Ticks can be very small and their bites are rarely felt.

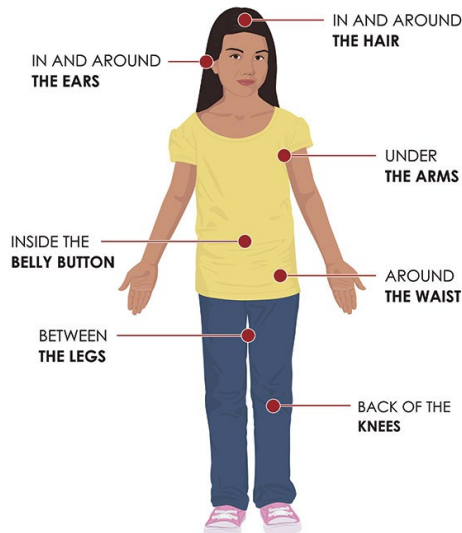
**Shower soon after being outdoors.** Showering within two hours of coming indoors has been shown to reduce your risk of getting Lyme disease and may be effective in reducing the risk of other tickborne diseases. Showering may help wash off unattached ticks and it is a good opportunity to do a tick check.

**Check your clothing for ticks.** Ticks may be carried into the house on clothing. Any ticks that are found should be removed. Tumble dry clothes in a dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks on dry clothing after you come indoors. If the clothes are damp, additional time may be needed. If the clothes require washing first, hot water is recommended. Cold and medium temperature water will not kill ticks.

**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.

Check these parts of your body and your child's body for ticks:

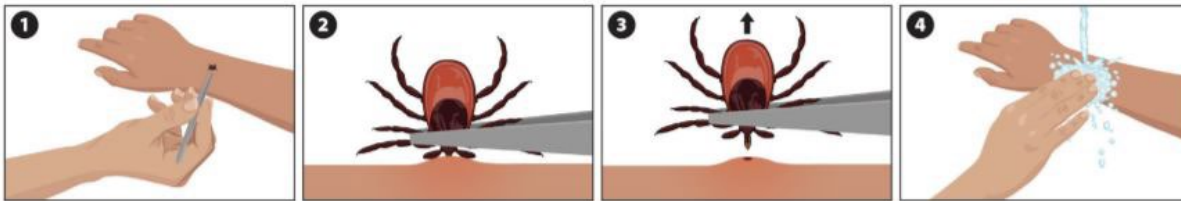
- Under the arms
- In and around the ears
- Inside belly button
- behind the knees
- on the scalp
- in the groin and around the waist



## Remove ticks right away!

**The longer the tick feeds, the greater your risk for infection. Try to remove the whole tick. If mouthparts remain, call your health-care provider.**

1. Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick's head as close to the skin as possible. (Don't grasp the tick's body)
2. Pull upward with slow, steady, pressure. Don't twist or jerk.
3. Put the tick in alcohol and a plastic bag or flush it down the toilet.
4. Never crush a tick with your fingers. Do not use a hot match, nail polish or petroleum jelly for tick removal!
5. Wash your hands and the bite area with soap and water.



*Graphic: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

Know the signs and treatment of Lyme disease & see your health care provider right away if you experience.

Early signs (within 30 days of infection)

- A red, ring-like rash that grows around the bite
- Flu-like signs (fever, headache, feeling tired & muscle aches)
- Swollen lymph nodes

Later signs (weeks/months after infection) may include

- Joint pain or swelling
- Facial paralysis
- Headache & stiff neck
- Memory problems
- Irregular heartbeat

For more information about Lyme Disease:

<https://www.in.gov/health/erc/zoonotic-and-vectorborne-epidemiology-entomology/diseases/lyme-disease/>

\*This information does not replace the advice of a qualified health care provider. Please talk to your doctor for any further questions or concerns.