

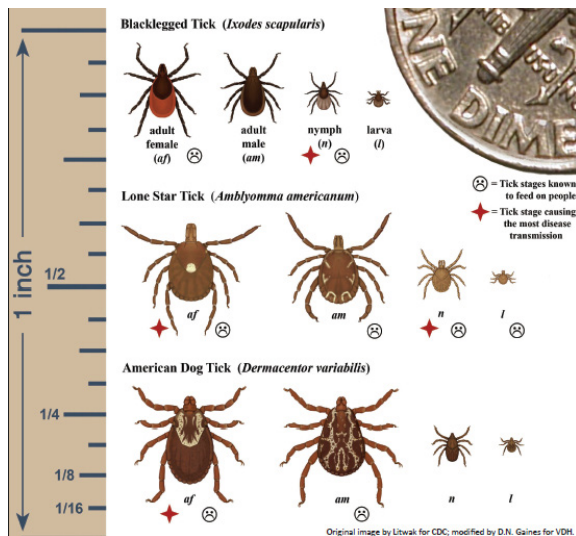
Tick-Borne Diseases are a Growing Public Health Threat

Tick-borne diseases are transmitted to humans and pets by a bite of a tiny, infected tick. Ticks become infected during the larva and nymphal phases of its life by feeding on small mammals and birds, that carry infectious agents like bacteria, viruses, or parasites. Later in their development, the infected nymphs and adults may transfer these diseases to animals and humans during feeding. The number of tick-borne diseases are increasing, as is the geographic regions that many of these ticks are found.

Tick Identification

Lyme disease, Babesiosis, and Anaplasmosis are the most common infections, in Southeastern Connecticut, transmitted by the blacklegged tick or commonly called a “deer tick” (*Ixodes scapularis*). The Lone Star and American Dog Tick can transmit infections that are far less common in our area.

Check out and note the difference between these ticks, found in the northeastern U.S.



Who is Most at Risk?

Some groups of people are more likely to become infected with a tick-borne disease because they spend more time in wooded areas, near bushes, in high grass or around leaf litter, where ticks are more likely to be found. These include:

- ~ children under the age of 15, who play in the woods, walk on wooded paths to school or play sports on fields where the deer population is high.
- ~ older adults who may have more time for walks in the woods, gardening or other outdoor activities.
- ~ outdoor workers, e.g., landscapers, camp counselors, coaches, utilities and highway workers, many state and municipal employees, etc.

Our goal is to reduce tick-borne diseases through increased awareness, use of personal protection measures and landscape modifications. Employers can do their part by providing personal protective equipment and educational materials to all at-risk employees.

For more information contact:
Ledge Light Health District
Tick-Borne Disease Prevention Program
860-448-4882

Protect Yourself from Tick-Borne Disease



Ledge Light Health District

Personal Protection from Lyme Disease

There are six basic strategies to prevent personal tick exposure and tickborne disease

Our Connecticut shoreline is great place to explore the great outdoors, whether it's hiking, gardening, biking, or playing in the woods. We can do so safely by keeping in mind that during the warm season months, deer ticks are active and can spread tick-borne diseases. Here are six simple things you can do:

1. Know where ticks live and be mindful when visiting these habitats

Ticks live in shaded areas, such as under tall grass, rock walls, leaf and wood piles, ground cover (like pachysandra), and at the edge of our yards, if they border a wooded area. Knowing that you are sharing these outdoor areas with ticks is important to remember. Ticks are most active from May - October, but they may be active anytime when the temperature is above 40°F.

2. Dress properly when entering areas where ticks may be living

Wearing long pants that are light-colored and white socks can help us spot ticks that might be crawling on us. If possible, tuck pant legs into your socks and your shirt into your pants when working near the ground. Cover your hair with a hat and contain long hair, especially when gardening.



3. Conduct tick checks, launder clothing, and shower as soon after leaving ANY possible tick habitat

Check your whole body and remember that ticks like to hide in unsuspecting places like the hairline, waist, under-arm, back of the knees, and behind the ears. Remember how small ticks are (nymphal ticks are about the size of a poppy seed).

Wash clothes in hot water or just put clothes in the dryer for 10 minutes to kill any ticks. Also, take a shower and wash your hair to get rid of any ticks that may be crawling on your skin.



4. Use DEET insect repellents and registered permethrin products to further reduce tick exposure

Adults can use DEET (diethyl-meta-toluramide) in concentrations of 30%, directly on exposed skin. Do not use DEET on children younger than six-months. Apply DEET when outdoors and avoid eyes, nose, mouth, and broken or irritated skin. Remember to wash the DEET off your skin after coming indoors.

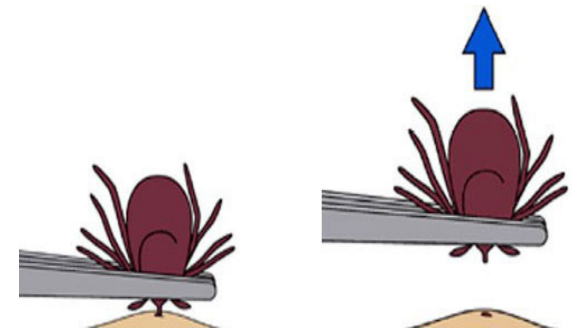
Permethrin products are for clothing only. Apply a thin layer of permethrin to the outer surface of pant and sleeve cuffs and boots. All products should be used as recommended. If a rash develops, wash the affected area and contact your health care provider.

5. Check pets daily for ticks, and use veterinarian-recommended tick control products when pets have daily exposure to ticks

Check your pets daily, especially between the toes, around the ears, eyes, and folds in the skin. Reduce or eliminate sleeping with your pets because ticks can crawl off your pets and become attached to you. Use non-organophosphate "spot-ons" (like Frontline or Advantage) on dogs and cats to kill or repel ticks.

6. Remove ticks promptly and correctly

If you find a tick attached to your skin, they must be removed as soon as possible to reduce the risk of transmitting any diseases they might carry. Using fine-tipped tweezers, grasp where the mouthparts enter the skin and pull upward in a slow, steady motion, until the tick releases. Clean the bite area with an antiseptic or soap and water.



To Learn More About Tick-Borne Diseases:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - www.cdc.gov

Connecticut Department of Public Health - <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Epidemiology-and-Emerging-Infections/Tick-borne-Diseases>

Conn OSHA - Workplace Guidance <https://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/osh/osh.htm>