Checking for Ticks

Reduce your chances of getting a tick-borne disease by checking your body for ticks after being outdoors. Use a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body.

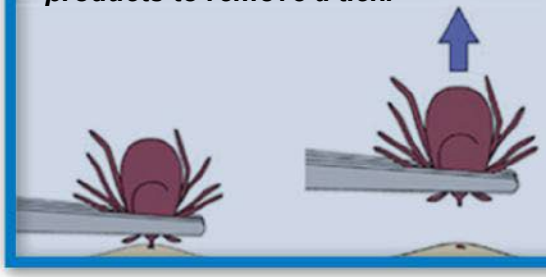
Be sure to check these parts of your body:

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

What to Do if You Find a Tick

1. Using fine-tipped tweezers, grab the tick close to the skin. Do not twist or jerk the tick, as this may cause the mouthparts to break off and remain in the skin.
2. With a steady motion, gently pull straight up until all parts of the tick are removed.
0. After removing the tick, clean your skin with soap and warm water.
1. Contact a healthcare provider if you develop symptoms of tick-borne disease.

Do not use petroleum jelly, hot matches, nail polish remover, or other products to remove a tick.



Where Can I Find More Information?

New Jersey Department of Health Communicable Disease Service: Vector-Borne Illness
www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/vectorborne.shtml

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Tick-Borne Disease
www.cdc.gov/ticks/diseases

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Stop Ticks
www.cdc.gov/features/stopticks

New Jersey Department of Health
Communicable Disease Service
PO Box 369
Trenton, NJ 08625
(609) 826-4872

Aug 2017 **C2471**

Tick-Borne DISEASES



TICK-BORNE DISEASES

What are tick-borne diseases?

Tick-borne diseases are illnesses that can be spread to humans by the bite of an infected tick. The most common tick-borne diseases in New Jersey are:

- Anaplasmosis
- Babesiosis
- Ehrlichiosis
- Lyme disease
- Rocky Mountain spotted fever

How do tick-borne diseases spread?

Ticks become infected when feeding on small infected mammals such as white-footed mice and voles. An infected tick can then infect a person through a tick bite. It is possible to be infected with more than one tick-borne disease at the same time.

Disease-causing ticks in NJ

These are common ticks in New Jersey that may spread disease to humans:

- Black-legged "deer" tick (Ixodes scapularis) can transmit Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, babesiosis and Powassan disease

  American dog tick (Dermacentor variabilis) can transmit Rocky Mountain spotted fever and tularemia

  Lone star tick (Amblyomma americanum) can transmit ehrlichiosis and tularemia



What are the symptoms of tick-borne diseases?

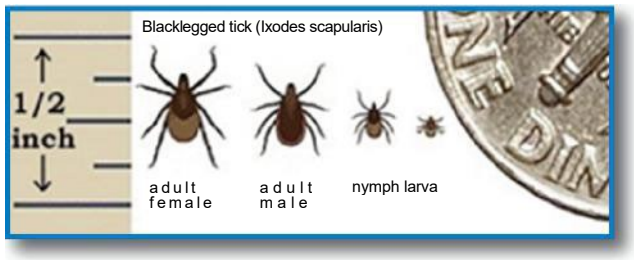
Early signs of tick-borne diseases can include:

- Skin rash
- Tiredness
- Fever/chills
- Headache
- Stiff neck
- Muscle aches
- Joint pain
- Dizziness

How soon after a tick bite do symptoms occur?

Lyme disease	**3-30 days**
Ehrlichiosis	**7-14 days**
Anaplasmosis	**7-14 days**
Rocky Mt. spotted fever	**2-14 days**
Babesiosis	**7-63+ days**

What is the treatment for tick-borne diseases?



Most tick-borne diseases (Lyme disease, ehrlichiosis, anaplasmosis, and Rocky Mountain spotted fever) are caused by bacteria and can be treated with antibiotics. Babesiosis is caused by a parasite similar to malaria, and a healthcare provider may prescribe medication. It is important to check for symptoms and talk to a healthcare provider if you've been bitten by a tick. Early treatment can be very effective.



Who gets tick-borne diseases?

Anyone who is bitten by an infected tick may get a tick-borne disease. People who spend a lot of time outdoors, especially from April to September, have a greater risk of becoming infected.

How are tick-borne diseases diagnosed?

Most tick-borne diseases are diagnosed through blood tests and by discussing symptoms with a healthcare provider.

How to Prevent Tick-Borne Diseases

✓ **DEET** ✓ **Showers** ✓ **Tick Checks**

Know where ticks are: ticks live in or near wooded or grassy areas. Always walk in the center of trails to avoid contact with ticks.

Keep your yard clean: mow lawns, clear brush and remove leaf litter.

Apply insecticides: use EPA-registered repellent with DEET on skin and permethrin on clothing, boots and camping gear.

Cover up: wear long sleeves and pants tucked into socks to prevent ticks from getting under clothes.

Shower: showering can help find and wash off unattached ticks.

Inspect: check your body for ticks.