

Lyme disease is an infection that can spread to your joints, heart, and nervous system, wreaking havoc along the way. The bacteria that causes it is carried primarily by ticks (specifically black-legged or deer ticks). To transmit lyme disease, a tick must bite you and enter your skin through the bite. If you can avoid tick bites entirely, or remove a tick that has bitten you right away, you can protect yourself from this debilitating disease. The sooner you remove the tick, the better off you will be.

HOW TO PREVENT TICK BITES

Dress appropriately. Wear light-colored clothing, long sleeve shirt and pants. Tuck shirt into pants, pant legs into socks or wear tall boots with pants tucked in.

Spray it. Spray DEET (at least 20% DEET) or picaridin insect repellent on skin; spray permethrin on clothing.

Watch it. Know your surroundings. Avoid tall grasses and humid, wooded, leaf-littered areas. Stay on trails and do not sit on logs. And remember: ticks aren't just in the woods, they're also in your backyard and in parks.

Tick check it. Always check for ticks after being outdoors.



HOW TO REMOVE A TICK SAFELY

1. Use pointy tick removal tweezers
2. Disinfect with rubbing alcohol
3. Grab tick close to skin and use slow, steady motion to pull tick out
4. Disinfect again
5. Consider testing the tick for infection

HOW TO PERFORM A TICK CHECK

Preferably in the shower, and within 2 hours of being outdoors, thoroughly check the following areas:

- Head & hair
- Feet & toes
- Back of neck & around ears
- Belly button & waistline
- Between legs & under arms
- Back of your knees
- Side of body
- Groin area, and other tight places (like belt area, watch strap, underneath hairline)



10 SYMPTOMS OF LYME DISEASE



Adult male deer tick enlarged to show detail. Ticks carrying Lyme disease are usually smaller than a sesame seed.

1. Fever, chills, headache, fatigue, muscle and joint aches, and swollen lymph nodes
2. Bulls eye rash (not always present)
3. Severe headaches and neck stiffness
4. Rashes
5. Severe joint pain and swelling
6. Intermittent pain in tendons, muscles, joints, and bones
7. Heart palpitations or an irregular heart beat
8. Dizziness or shortness of breath
9. Shooting pains, numbness, or tingling in the hands or feet
10. Problems with short-term memory

If you think you might have Lyme disease, be your own advocate! Contact your physician, pay attention to symptoms, and request a blood test. And use the resources at projectlyme.org to learn more about diagnosis and treatment.

LEARN MORE AT PROJECTLYME.ORG