



## Tips for Lyme Disease Prevention

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that more than 25,000 Americans will develop Lyme disease this year — 25,000! Fortunately, there are several ways to protect yourself and your family from tick bites and tick-borne illnesses such as Lyme disease.

- **Know where to expect ticks.**

Ticks typically live in moist environments, usually in or near wooded or grassy areas. To avoid ticks, walk in the center of trails and avoid walking through bushy areas with high grass or leaf litter.

- **Wear protective clothing.**

Ticks can be kept away from the skin by wearing long sleeved shirts and long pants tucked into socks. Wearing light colored clothing will make it easier to spot ticks on clothing.

- **Use an insect repellent with DEET (on skin or clothing).**

Always use caution when applying repellents and be sure to follow product instructions carefully. Adults should apply skin repellents to children, taking care to avoid their hands, eyes, and mouth.

- **Use Permethrin on clothing or gear.**

Permethrin is a pesticide that kills ticks and mites. It can be applied to boots, clothing, and camping gear. Never apply permethrin directly to skin.

- **Prevent ticks on pets.**

Use veterinarian recommended tick killing products or treatments.

- **Create tick-safe zones in your yard.**

Regularly remove leaf litter and clear tall grasses and brush. Using wood chips or gravel along borders between lawns and wooded areas can reduce the number of ticks living on your lawn. Lawns that are well trimmed and exposed to sunlight make inhospitable environments for ticks. Professional pest control experts can further reduce your property's tick population by applying various chemical agents.

- **Discourage deer.**

Constructing physical barriers that restrict deer (carriers of ticks) from certain areas of your property can decrease the number of ticks present.

- **Inspect your clothes and skin daily.**

Check yourself and your children thoroughly after being outdoors, even after short periods of time spent in your own backyard.

- **Be sure to check the following areas:**

- In and around the ears
- Around the waist and inside belly button
- Back of the knees & inner thighs
- In and around all head and body hair

- **Remove attached ticks quickly and correctly.**  
Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible. Pull upward with steady, even pressure. After removing the tick, thoroughly clean both the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub, or soap and water.  
Removing ticks within 36 hours makes transmission of the bacteria that causes Lyme very unlikely.
- **Be alert for fever or rash.**  
An unexpected fever or odd rash may be the first sign of a tick-borne disease. See your healthcare provider for evaluation if these symptoms develop.