

# Ticks and You

Ticks are on wild animals, such as deer. Pets and people can pick up ticks by walking through grassy or wooded areas or contact with wild animals.

The risk of a person getting Lyme disease from a tick in Alberta is considered very low. Most ticks do not carry the Lyme disease bacteria, and most tick bites do not cause serious health problems. The sooner a tick is removed, the less likely it is to spread disease.

## Protecting yourself from tick bites

Cover up as much skin as you can when you're going to be in wooded or grassy areas. Wear a hat, a long-sleeved shirt, and long pants with the legs tucked into your socks. It's a good idea to wear light-coloured clothes so ticks are easier to identify. Check yourself for ticks after you've been outside.

Use a bug spray that contains the chemical DEET to repel ticks. Check your pets for ticks after they've been outside.

If you find a tick on yourself or another person, you can remove it:

### Do:

- With tweezers gently grasp its head and mouth as close to the skin as possible.
- Pull the tick straight out, do not jerk or twist
- Place tick in a clean, empty pill bottle, or zip lock bag with no ventilation holes, with a small piece of moist tissue
- Call ahead to Environmental Public Health to submit the tick for bacterial testing.

### Do not:

- Squash it
- Apply matches, cigarettes, or petroleum jellies to tick as these may cause the infected tick to release the bacteria into the wound.



## When to seek medical attention

Individuals should seek medical attention if symptoms of Lyme disease develop. Symptoms include:

- a round, red rash, that spreads at the site of a tick bite, known as a “bull’s eye rash”.
- Flu-like symptoms: very tired, headaches, sore muscles and joints, fever.

Read more on Lyme disease symptoms at <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/health/pages/conditions.aspx?hwid=hw77226>

**If you have more questions, call  
Health Link at 1-866-408-5465**

## Contact information

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