

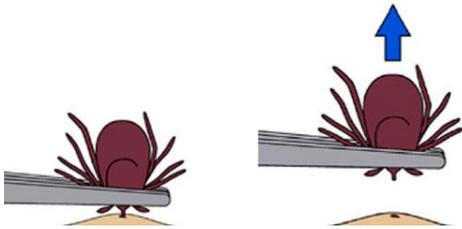
## HOW TO REMOVE A TICK

*Wash hands with soap and water and cleanse the area with an antiseptic.*

Grasp the embedded tick with fine-tipped tweezers (never with bare hands) as close to your skin as possible.

With a steady motion, pull the tick's body away from the skin.

DO NOT jerk or twist the tick as you extract it.



- **DO NOT** apply alcohol,
- **DO NOT** use fingernail polish,
- **DO NOT** use heat from a lit match,
- **DO NOT** use petroleum jelly on the tick.

These methods are not effective and can increase the chances of the tick transmitting the disease. If the

tick cannot be removed or part of it is left in the skin, consult your physician. If the tick's mouthparts remain in the skin, do not be alarmed. The bacteria that cause Lyme disease are contained in the tick's mid-gut.

## GET the TICK IDENTIFIED

Place the tick in a zip-lock bag along with a moistened napkin, tissue, or cotton ball.

**Bring the tick to the East Shore District Health Department** to have the tick identified (\$5 processing fee). The tick will be sent to the CT Agricultural Laboratory for testing.

Tick testing may help your physician evaluate if you were exposed to the Lyme disease agent. No matter what the testing result, you should monitor yourself for the signs and symptoms of Lyme disease after being bitten by a tick.

# Lyme Disease

**What is Lyme Disease?**

**How Can I Avoid Getting Lyme?**



**East Shore District Health Dept.**  
688 East Main St.  
Orchard Research Park  
Branford CT  
203-481-4233  
[www.esdhd.org](http://www.esdhd.org)

## WHAT IS LYME DISEASE?

Lyme disease is a preventable bacterial infection transmitted to humans in Connecticut by the bite of the Black-legged tick. Lyme disease was named for Old Lyme, Connecticut where it was first recognized in 1975.

The tick transmits the Lyme disease bacterium to humans when the tick feeds on a person.

## WHAT ARE TICKS?

Ticks are small, spider-like creatures that have eight legs attached to a flattened body and can be found on grasses, shrubs and leaf litter.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF I GET BIT?

Within 30 days of when a tick became attached, an expanding rash may appear (not always at the bite site). Flu-like symptoms may also develop that often include fatigue, headache, stiff neck, muscle aches and joint pains. Some individuals will have neither recognized illness nor the rash. For these patients, the physician will have greater difficulty making the correct diagnosis.

Possible complications include chronic arthritis, nervous system

abnormalities, and cardiac disease. These symptoms may develop if the disease is not properly or promptly treated.

## WHAT ABOUT PETS

Pets and other animals can get Lyme disease, showing signs such as swollen joints and lameness.

Contact your veterinarian if your pet exhibits symptoms such as arthritis or nervous system abnormalities and has been in an area where ticks occur.

Your veterinarian can provide information on the vaccine and tick repellent strategies appropriate for pets.



## HOW CAN I PREVENT GETTING LYME DISEASE?

The best prevention against Lyme disease is to avoid being bitten by ticks.

- **Avoid entering areas that are likely to be infested with ticks** such as brushy and grassy areas as well as off-the-trail hikes. Choose wide trails and walk in the center.
- **Inspect yourself** and others (including pets) thoroughly for ticks at least once an hour while walking in suspected tick infested areas.
- **Wear light colored clothing** so ticks can be seen and removed before they become attached to skin.
- **Wear long pants and long-sleeved clothing.** Tuck pants into socks or boots, and shirt into pants.
- **Use approved repellents** around shoes, ankles and on exposed skin. Be sure to follow the manufacturers instructions carefully!