

### How should I dispose of a tick?

Place the tick in a sealed container or small plastic bag and put it in the trash. Do not flush ticks down sinks or toilets because they can easily survive in the water.

### **LYME DISEASE AND YOUR PETS**

To reduce the chances that a tick will transmit disease to you or your pets:

- Check your pets for ticks daily, especially after they spend time outdoors. If you find a tick on your dog, remove it right away.
- Ask your veterinarian to conduct a tick check at each exam.
- Talk to your veterinarian about tickborne diseases in your area.
- Talk with your veterinarian about using tick preventives on your pet.

Note: Cats are extremely sensitive to a variety of chemicals. Do not apply any insect acaricides or repellents to your cats without first consulting your veterinarian!

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### How can I make my yard less attractive to ticks?

- Here are some simple landscaping techniques that can help reduce tick populations in your yard:
- Clear tall grasses and brush around homes and at the edge of lawns.
- Place a 3-ft wide barrier of wood chips or gravel between lawns and wooded areas and around patios and play equipment. This will restrict tick migration into recreational areas.
- Mow the lawn frequently and keep leaves raked.
- Stack wood neatly and in a dry area (discourages rodents that ticks feed on).
- Keep playground equipment, decks, and patios away from yard edges and trees and place them in a sunny location, if possible.
- Remove any old furniture, mattresses, or trash from the yard that may give ticks a place to hide.

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## How to Protect Yourself from Lyme Disease



### What is Lyme disease?

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection that is spread by the bite of an infected tick. The blacklegged tick or deer tick (*Ixodes scapularis*) is responsible for the spread of Lyme disease in New Jersey. Lyme disease can lead to potentially serious health problems.

### Why do ticks carry Lyme disease?

Ticks become infected with the bacteria that causes Lyme disease by feeding on infected white-footed mice, deer, other small mammals such as voles.



## Can ticks spread other diseases?

Yes, infected ticks can spread diseases other than Lyme disease to humans including: Ehrlichiosis, Anaplasmosis, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, and Babesiosis. Because bites from infected ticks can cause various diseases, it is important to protect yourself and your family from ticks.

## What are the signs and symptoms of Lyme disease?

The early symptoms of Lyme disease may resemble those of various other infectious and non-infectious diseases. The most common symptoms may include:

Tiredness      Fever      Headache  
Stiff Neck      Muscle Aches      Joint Pain

A rash that looks like a bull's-eye, which may be warm to the touch and is rarely itchy or painful, may occur at the site of the tick bite.



Bull's-eye rash at the site of tick bite.  
Occurs in 60 to 80% of infected people.

If untreated, some people with Lyme disease may also develop arthritis, nervous system problems, and heart problems weeks or months later.

## How can I prevent Lyme disease?

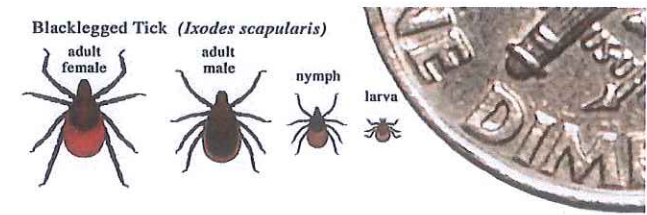
You can reduce your risk by taking these actions to avoid tick bites, or to safely remove a tick if you are bitten:

- Avoid areas where ticks hide such as wooded areas with dense shrubs and leaf litter.
- Make your yard less attractive to ticks by keeping lawns mowed and shrubs trimmed.
- Wear solid, light-colored clothing. This will make it easier to find a tick on your clothes.
- To prevent ticks from attaching to your skin, tuck your pants into your socks and wear a long-sleeved shirt when in tick habitats.
- Use insect repellents. There are two types of repellents effective for ticks. Repellents that contain DEET can be used on clothing and exposed skin. The other type of repellent contains permethrin and should ONLY be used on clothing. Always read and follow label directions carefully.
- Check yourself for ticks frequently when you are in tick-infested areas.

When checking for ticks, check places where ticks like to hide including the scalp, behind the ears, under the arms, on the ankles, and the groin area.

## What do ticks look like?

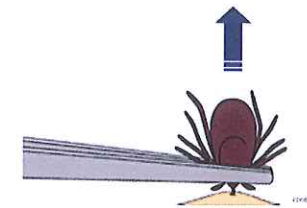
Below is a visual representation of ticks of different ages in relation to the size of a dime.



## What should I do if I find a tick?

- If you find a tick, remove it immediately before it attaches to the skin. Do not squeeze or crush it with bare hands.

- If a tick has already attached to the skin, use tweezers to grasp it by the head (not just the body) as close to the skin as possible. Pull steadily until the tick pulls out (expect some resistance).



- Never squeeze an attached tick, burn it, or cover it with Vaseline or any other substance. Doing so could force fluid from the tick into your skin.
- After removing a tick, disinfect the bite area and tweezers with alcohol, and wash your hands with soap and hot water.