It’s Tick Season!

know what to look for and what to do

Ticks can be found in Illinois in fields and wooded areas and may carry serious diseases. Lyme disease is the most frequently reported tick-borne disease in the Midwest. However, other tick-borne diseases to be aware of include Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Anaplasmosis, Ehrlichiosis, and Babesiosis.

MOST COMMON TICKS IN NORTHERN IL

Blacklegged Tick (Ixodes scapularis)

Lone Star Tick (Amblyomma americanum)

Dog Tick (Dermacentor variabilis)

Note: Relative sizes of several ticks at different life stages

Engorged female Blacklegged Tick. Color may vary

THE TWO YEAR LIFE CYCLE

Risk of human infection is greatest in late spring and summer

PREVENTION WHILE OUTDOORS
- Wear long sleeved shirts, a hat, long pants, and closed-toe shoes. Tuck pants into tall socks.
- Walk in the center of the trail and avoid tall grass. Ticks cannot jump or fly but they can climb.
- Apply insect repellent that contains at least 20% DEET. Always follow the label, especially regarding children.
- Check yourself, children, and pets every few hours. Ticks may attach anywhere on the body including hard to reach areas and in your hair.
- Consult your veterinarian for pet protection recommendations.
- Shower as soon as possible after coming indoors.

REMOVING TICKS
- Using fine-tipped tweezers, firmly pinch under the tick’s body, close to the skin.
- SLOWLY lift perpendicular to the skin until the skin puckers and the tick releases.
- Wash the area immediately with soap and water and wipe with rubbing alcohol.
- Check the spot to make sure the head isn’t lodged in the skin, if so, contact your doctor.
- Store the tick in a container. Note date and location for possible identification and testing.

SOME SYMPTOMS THAT MAY SUGGEST TICK-BORNE ILLNESS
- Within 3-14 days, developing a ring-like “bulls eye” rash on any part of the body (may indicate Lyme Disease)
- Fatigue, fever, and chills
- Headache, swollen lymph nodes
- Stiff neck, joint and muscle pain
- Paralysis or heart palpitations
- The bite site appears infected

** If you have unexplained illness with fever, contact your physician. Be sure to mention possible tick exposure. **

More information on tick identification, tick-borne disease, and testing can be found at:

→ MCDH.info
→ Environmental Health
→ Nuisance Control
→ Ticks and Lyme Disease

Graphics: CDC.gov