3. Use commercial insect repellents containing 20-30% DEET (N,N-diethyl meta-toluamide) as indicated on the product label. Apply SPARINGLY to shoes, socks and pants, and exposed skin. Avoid over-exposure or direct skin contact with products having more than 30% DEET, particularly when treating children. Check with your doctor if you experience a problem.

4. Stay near the center of trails and roads to avoid brush and tall grass.

5. When you are outside, check yourself frequently for crawling ticks. If you find one, remove it with your fingers or a pair of tweezers. Remember to check creases in clothing.

6. If you work or live in an area where deer ticks are found, you should check yourself and your children nightly for attached ticks, particularly during the summer months when the tiny nymphs are active. Inspect the entire body for ticks. Prompt removal of the tick is important.

What do I do if I think I have Lyme Disease?

The precautions mentioned here reduce, but DO NOT eliminate your chances of getting bitten by ticks and getting Lyme Disease. If you develop an unusual, expanding rash or flu-like symptoms or joint pain, particularly in the summer, see your physician immediately. A clinical examination, history of tick bite, and, in some cases, a blood test, will help make a diagnosis possible. Lyme Disease can be effectively treated with antibiotics, especially when detected early.

What is my local health department doing about Lyme Disease?

Your local health department is taking an active role in educating the public about Lyme Disease and its prevention; it is continually monitoring local cases.

If you have any further questions regarding Lyme Disease or ticks, please call the Lyme Disease Hotline at 338-8443.

T uck pants in socks and shirt in pants

I nsect repellent should be applied to clothing

C heck yourself for ticks

K now the symptoms of Lyme Disease

S ee your doctor

"Drawings provided by Lederle Laboratories as part of a continuing commitment to education for better health."

Prepared by the Health Departments of the Lower Hudson Valley region:
Dutchess • Orange • Putnam • Rockland
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SEAL OF ULSTER COUNTY STATE OF NEW YORK 1683

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ULSTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Great Outdoors

A Guide to Preventing Tick bites & Lyme Disease



PREVENT LYME DISEASE
LYME HOTLINE 338-8443

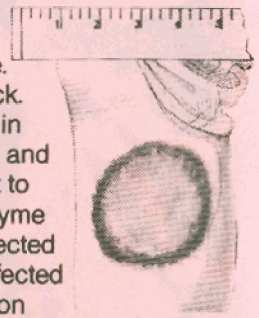
Why do ticks bite?

Ticks are spider-like creatures that go through three active stages during their life. These are called the larval, nymphal, and adult stages. Each of these stages requires a blood meal. A tick bites an animal (called a "host") in order to obtain this meal. When a tick bites, it usually remains attached for several days in order to get a complete meal.

Why is it important to prevent tick bites?

Ticks are capable of transmitting disease to humans. If a tick is infected with a disease and this tick bites a person, the disease may be passed to the person. The most common tick-borne illness in southern New York State is Lyme Disease.

What is Lyme Disease?



Lyme Disease is a potentially serious disease caused by a bacterium called a spirochete. It is transmitted by the deer tick. The spirochete can be found in nymphal and adult deer ticks, and only these stages are thought to be important transmitters of Lyme Disease. Animals become infected when they are bitten by an infected tick. Some animals can pass on the infection to uninfected ticks which subsequently bite them. If a human is unlucky enough to be bitten by an infected deer tick, the spirochete may pass to the person. This person may develop Lyme Disease.

Early symptoms of Lyme Disease may include flu-like symptoms and an expanding skin rash. If untreated, cardiac and neurologic problems, and even chronic arthritis, may develop.

What do deer ticks look like?

Nymphal deer ticks are black and about the size of a poppy seed. The adult females are black and red-orange; they are the size of an apple seed. The males are all black and slightly smaller.

Female Actual Size Nymph

When nymphs and females are filled with blood (engorged) they can be many times larger.

Where and when are deer ticks found?

Deer ticks are commonly found in woodland areas which have deer, mice, and other animals they feed on. They can also be found in grassy and brushy habitat located near the woods. This can include residential lawns, along highways and railroads, and in recreational parks.

The nymphal ticks may be found throughout the spring and summer, and even into the fall. However, they are most active during the months of June and July, when most of the Lyme Disease cases have their onset. Adult deer ticks are commonly found only during the spring and fall and occasionally during the winter. Not all nymphs and adults are infected with the Lyme Disease spirochete, but rates are high and can approach 50 percent.

Who is at risk of getting bitten by deer ticks?

Anyone who lives and works near wooded or grassy areas in the Lower Hudson Valley is at risk for getting bitten by deer ticks and possibly getting Lyme Disease. Recreational activities such as hiking, gardening, and hunting may also expose you to tick bites. Occupations which may present risk include:

- Landscapers
- Gardeners
- Surveyors
- Park rangers
- Highway Maintenance Workers
- Naturalists
- Railroad Workers
- Pest Control Operators
- Utility Workers

If you work in areas where ticks are found, you should consider carrying a "tick-bite prevention kit." The kit should include a pair of white coveralls, a roll of 2-inch masking tape for taping pant cuffs, insect repellent, fine-tipped tweezers, antiseptic and a small container to keep tick specimens for later identification.

What do I do if I find an attached tick?

When a tick bites, only the mouthparts are inserted into the skin; it is not likely that you will feel the bite. If you find an attached tick do not squeeze the body of the tick or apply anything to the tick to remove it. Instead, grasp the mouthparts with a pair of fine-tipped tweezers as close to the skin as possible. Pull the tick out steadily and firmly. Sometimes the tick breaks upon removal. Even if this happens, the tick is no longer capable of transmitting Lyme Disease. Remove the mouthparts as you would a splinter. Apply antiseptic to the bite area.

You should save the tick in a small container for later identification. You might want to notify your physician so there is a record of your possible exposure to Lyme Disease.

For more information, call 338-8443.



What can I do to prevent tick bites?

The best way to avoid tick bites and prevent Lyme Disease is to avoid areas where ticks are found. However, if you go into tick-infested areas, the following steps should be taken:

1. Wear light-colored, tightly-woven clothing. The light color will make it easier to see ticks and the tight weave may make it harder for the ticks to grab hold.
2. Tuck your pants into your socks and your shirt into your pants. Ticks do not fly or jump. They cling to fallen leaves, grass, low plants or brush. When a host passes, the tick grabs on. The tick has a natural tendency to crawl upwards on a person's body.