



Ticks: What You Should Know for the Summer



Summer is here and so are the bugs. While most bugs announce their presence with loud buzzing, some are far quieter but we should remain aware of them. When an infected blood-sucking insect (like a tick) bites a person, they can spread vector-borne illnesses such as **Lyme disease**. Ticks are obligate blood-feeders that require an animal host to survive and reproduce. They feed on a wide variety of mammals, birds, reptiles, and even amphibians.

Disease-causing Ticks in New Jersey

New Jersey has three (3) common ticks that may spread disease to humans:

- **Black-legged "Deer" Tick** can transmit Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, babesiosis, and Powassan disease
- **American Dog Tick** can transmit Rocky Mountain spotted fever and tularemia
- **Lone Star Tick** can transmit ehrlichiosis and tularemia



What are Tick-borne Diseases?

Tick-borne diseases are illnesses that can be spread to humans by the bite of an infected tick. Below is a chart of the most common tick-borne diseases in NJ and their incubation periods:

Tick-borne Disease	Incubation Period (days)
Lyme disease	3 to 30
Ehrlichiosis	7 to 14
Anaplasmosis	7 to 14
Rocky Mountain spotted fever	2 to 14
Babesiosis	7 to 63+

Lyme disease is an illness caused by bacteria that is carried by infected ticks, and it is most frequently reported from the Upper Midwestern and Northeastern United States.

What are the Signs & Symptoms of Tick-borne Diseases?

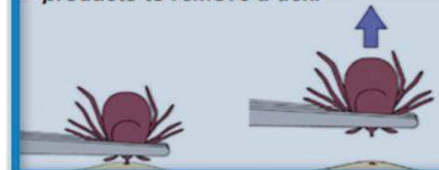
Early signs of tick-borne diseases can include the following:

- Skin rash
- Tiredness
- Fever/Chills
- Headache
- Stiff neck
- Muscle aches
- Joint pain
- Dizziness

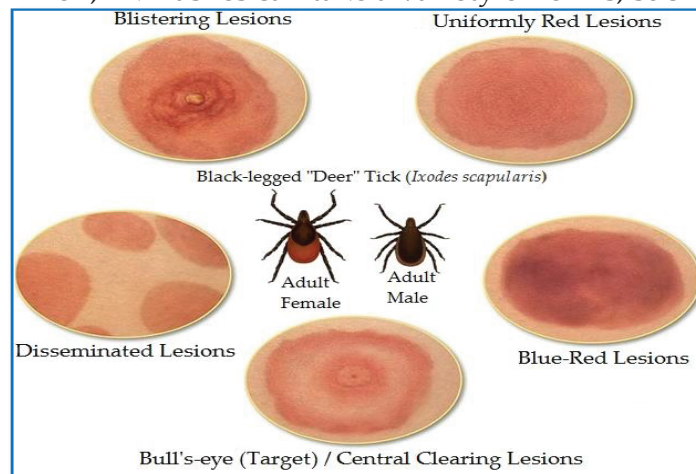
What to Do if You Find a Tick

1. Using fine-tipped tweezers, grab the tick close to the skin. Do not twist or jerk the tick, as this may cause the mouthparts to break off and remain in the skin.
2. With a steady motion, gently pull straight up until all parts of the tick are removed.
3. After removing the tick, clean your skin with soap and warm water.
4. Contact a healthcare provider if you develop symptoms of tick-borne disease.

Do not use petroleum jelly, hot matches, nail polish remover, or other products to remove a tick.



For **Lyme disease** specifically, one localized symptom is an erythema migrans (EM) skin rash, which is a red ring-like or homogenous expanding rash. It is important to note that this “classic rash” is not present in all cases, but occurs in 70-80% of patients with Lyme disease. EM rashes expand slowly over a few days after which they may develop a “bull’s-eye” appearance consisting of a red ring with central clearing. Though this description of a “bull’s-eye” appearance is more common, EM rashes can take a variety of forms, such as:

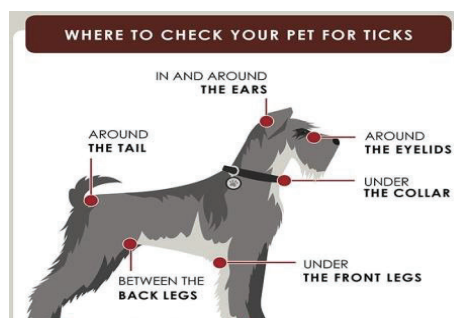


What is the Treatment for Tick-borne Diseases?

Most tick-borne diseases are caused by bacteria and can be treated with **antibiotics**. It is important to check for symptoms and talk to a healthcare provider if you’ve been bitten by a tick. *Early treatment can be very effective.*

How to Prevent Tick-borne Diseases?

- **Know Where Ticks Are:** Ticks live in or near wooded or grassy areas. Always walk in the center of trails to avoid contact with ticks.
- **Keep Your Yard Clean:** Mow lawns, clear brush, and remove leaf litter.
- **Apply Insecticides:** Use EPA-registered repellent with DEET on skin and permethrin on clothing, boots, and camping gear.
- **Cover Up:** Wear long sleeves and pants tucked into socks to prevent ticks from getting under clothes.
- **Shower:** Showering can help find and wash off unattached ticks.
- **Inspect:** Check your body -- and your children’s -- for ticks after being outside and use a mirror to view hard-to-see areas.
- **Protect Pets:** Keep pets safe by checking them for ticks daily and using tick control products as recommended by your veterinarian. **It is important to note that your dog can receive the Lyme disease vaccine as prevention.**





For more information, and our Works Cited, please visit:

CDC, NJDOH, *Tick-borne Diseases of the United States:*

<https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/tickbornediseases/TickborneDiseases-P.pdf>

NJDOH, *Fight the Bite, NJ!:*

https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/vectorborne.shtml?fbclid=IwAR0oFixtLeJ1RqHwoWEjODPtj_cdzvQ5arurSbTOIW-rIurLj1IL9uXVHDU

NJDOH, *How to Avoid Tick Bites:*

https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/avoid_tick_bites_feb2018.pdf

NJDOH, *Tick-borne Diseases:*

https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/vectorborne/C2471--tick-borne_diseases_brochure.pdf

NJDOH, *Lyme Disease:*

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/lyme.shtml>

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, NJDOH, *Tick Management Handbook:*

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/CAES/DOCUMENTS/Publications/Bulletins/b1010pdf.pdf?la=en>

We hope you have found this information useful for your wellbeing.



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