

Everyone is aware by now that Ticks can carry Lyme Disease, but did you know that there are other deadly diseases that they can carry?

Two new tick-borne illnesses have been discovered, and neither has specific treatment, and people can be infected by more than one tick-borne illness simultaneously.



Lyme disease is the most common tick-borne illness, with about 30,000 cases reported each year, although the Center for Disease Control estimates the number could actually be ten times higher.

Ticks live in moist and humid environments, particularly in or near woody or grassy areas. They need blood to survive, so they choose to live in habitats frequented by potential mammal hosts such as deer. As ticks attach themselves to birds, they could be anywhere across the country.

Contrary to some belief, ticks don't live in trees and drop onto your head – they live in the grass and climb up your body.

Of course, not all Ticks carry disease. In the case of Lyme disease, only the blacklegged tick carries the bacteria.

Ticks burrow under the skin and feed off blood. A tick carrying the bacteria that can cause Lyme disease can only transmit it after filling itself with blood, which takes at least 24 hours.

**NO MATTER WHERE YOU LIVE,
TICK-AVOIDING ADVICE IS SIMILAR**

- Shower soon after being outdoors to spot ticks more easily, and check pets that can carry ticks inside.
- If you've been in tick-infested areas, carefully do a full-body check, including under arms, the groin, behind knees, ears and hair.
- When in the woods, walk in the centre of trails, avoiding brush and leaf litter.
- Use bug repellent with DEET on exposed skin, or wear long pants and long sleeves.
- Discourage ticks around homes by keeping grass cut; removing leaf litter and brush; placing a barrier of wood chips or gravel between lawns and wooded areas.

**SYMPTOMS OF LYME DISEASE CAN
INCLUDE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:**

- skin rash
- headache
- fever or chills
- fatigue (tiredness)

**WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU HAVE
BEEN BITTEN BY A BLACKLEGGED TICK?**

There are different schools of thought for this. One is that you should get the tick to “back out” by blowing out a match and touching the tick. Other advice is to use clean tweezers,



grasp the head as close to the skin as possible and slowly pull straight out (like removing a sliver).

Afterwards, wash the site of the bite with soap and water or disinfect with alcohol or hand sanitizer. If mouthparts break off and remain in the skin, remove them with tweezers.

If possible, save the tick in a zip-lock bag and record the date of the bite. If you develop symptoms of Lyme disease in the weeks after being bitten, contact your health care provider right away. Bring the tick with you to your medical appointment, as it may help the doctor assess your illness.

- spasms or weakness
- numbness or tingling
- swollen lymph nodes. oval-shaped organ found in the body, such as the armpit or stomach