

Lyme Disease and Other Tick-borne Diseases

Categories : [Health Issues](#)

Tick-borne diseases are those spread by the bite of an infected tick. These diseases can be caused by bacteria, parasites, or viruses, although the diseases caused by bacteria are most common. Several tick species found in Connecticut can spread types of bacteria that can cause illness in humans, and infection with more than one is possible through one tick bite. Ixodes Scapularis ticks, also known as black-legged or deer ticks, and are typically found in grassy and overgrown areas. Ticks do not jump, fly or drop out of trees, and usually are picked up on the lower legs and crawl up the body to find a feeding spot. The bite is usually painless, so people do not know they have been bitten. To prevent exposure to tick bites, use the following protective measures below.

To find additional tips and resources on the other various tick-borne diseases found in Connecticut and elsewhere, visit the Connecticut Department of Public Health's: "Tick-borne Diseases" website page: <https://portal.ct.gov/dph/epidemiology-and-emerging-infections/tickborne-diseases>

- Avoid tall grass and over-grown areas
- When hiking stay in the middle of trails
- Consider using tick repellent
- Tuck pant leg into socks
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and closed shoes
- Wear light-colored clothing to see the ticks easier for removal
- Use insect repellent to help reduce the chance of tick bites (DEET is the primary active ingredient to repel ticks, and must be used as directed on the container)
- Examine yourself, your children, and pets for ticks when returning indoors
- When returning home after an outing, shower using a washcloth or puff to remove unattached ticks
- Dry your clothes before washing if you've been outside, take off clothes and throw them in the dryer on high heat for at least 20 minutes
- Talk to your veterinarian to find out how to protect your pets from tick bites, and the role of vaccine for dogs

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Early signs and symptoms generally appear 2-32 days after a bite by an infected deer tick. Since Lyme disease is a multi-systemic illness, there are a multitude of Lyme disease symptoms. Most cases of Lyme disease can be treated successfully with a few weeks of antibiotics. These include:

- Flu-like symptoms, e.g. muscle aches, fatigue, and fever.
- Expanding red rash (Note: many people do not get the red bull's eye expanding rash)
- Other rashes on parts of body
- Facial or Bell's Palsy
- Heart palpitations
- Dizziness
- Joint pain & swelling

For additional information and resources on this disease, see the following:

- Centers for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/>
- Lymedisease.org: <https://www.lymedisease.org/news-blogs/news/>



- Lyme Disease Association: <https://www.lymediseaseassociation.org/>

TICK IDENTIFICATION AND TESTING IN CONNECTICUT

Ticks can be taken to your municipal health department or regional health district for identification and testing. The health department will deliver ticks to the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, <https://portal.ct.gov/caes/tick-office/tick-office/information-on-submitting-ticks> for identification and testing. Individuals can also take ticks to the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station in New Haven for identification only.

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SOURCES: Lyme Disease Association; Connecticut Department of Public Health; United States Centers for Disease Control

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CONTENT LAST REVIEWED: March2025