

SPOTLIGHT ON SAFETY

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LYME DISEASE



Lyme disease is caused by bacteria transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected blacklegged tick. Symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue and a characteristic skin rash that has a bulls-eye appearance. Infection can spread to joints, the heart, and the nervous system if not treated.

Ticks are six-legged insects about the size of a sesame seed. They are found close to the ground, especially in moist, shaded, and wooded areas, and on low plants in the edges of hiking trails.

If you work outside during spring to midsummer, you risk being bitten by ticks and possibly contracting Lyme disease. Use the safety tips below to protect yourself from ticks.

Protect Yourself

- Wear light colored clothing and long-sleeved shirts and pants
- Use insecticides around ankles - 85% of the ticks found on clothing are found between the ankle region and the knee
- Tuck pant legs into socks
- Perform tick checks at least every night
- Apply a pesticide for ticks to your property in spring

Remove Tick from Skin (as soon as you notice it)

- Use fine-tipped tweezers to firmly grasp the tick as close to your skin as possible
- With a steady motion, pull the tick's body away from your skin
- Avoid crushing the tick's body
- If you accidentally crush the tick, clean your skin with soap and warm water or alcohol
- Do not be alarmed if the tick's mouthparts remain in the skin - once the mouthparts are removed from the rest of the tick, it can't transmit the Lyme disease bacteria
- Clean your skin with soap and warm water (check the bitten area for a month and go to the doctor if you get a rash)
- Do not use petroleum jelly, a hot match, nail polish, or other products to remove a tick
- Throw the dead tick away with your household trash

For More Information

- Lyme disease in California at <http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7485.html>
- Learn about Lyme Disease from the Centers for Disease Control at <https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/>