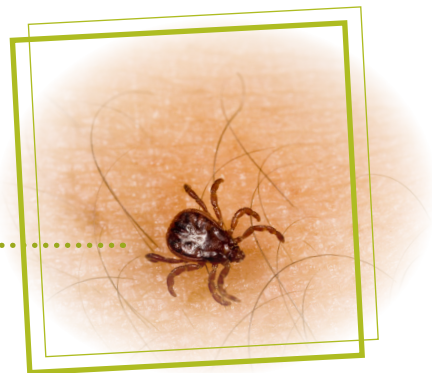


# Tick-borne Diseases

## What you need to know?



### What are tick borne diseases?

Tick borne diseases are a group of illnesses that people can get from ticks.

The ticks are found in parts of Southern BC, southern and eastern Ontario, southeastern Manitoba and Nova Scotia. Ticks can be carried by birds, and can be found in any rural and suburban setting, commonly in the foothills, mountains, and aspen parkland areas. The risk of contact with ticks begins in early spring and ends in the fall. (4 degrees and above and no snow), however the risk in Alberta is limited.

Tick borne diseases include Lyme Disease (which is the most common), Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever and Tularemia.

### Symptoms and health effects of Lyme Disease

- Fever
- Tiredness
- Headache
- Nausea
- Sore Muscles

### What to look for

A circular red rash starting at the tick bite and spreading out often as a growing circle or “bull’s eye.” It usually starts 3-30 days after the bite. In some cases, Lyme disease results in neurological and muscular problems for weeks or months. More serious ailments such as, meningitis, heart problems, and arthritis may be present for years.

## How can I avoid Lyme Disease?

- Don't walk bare-legged in tall grass, bush, or woods where ticks might be found.
- Cover up as much as possible with long sleeved shirts, and tuck long pants into your socks
- Use a DEET product for your clothes and skin.
- Wear light coloured clothes. Ticks are dark and therefore easier to see on light coloured clothes
- Remove clothes and do a daily check after being outdoors. Make sure to check behind the ears, on the earlobes and in the nape of your neck. You most likely won't feel the tick when it's embedded in those spots.
- Regularly check children and pets after they have been outside in tick infested areas.

## What if I find a tick embedded in my skin?

- Do not squash it. The bacteria will go directly into your skin.
- Grasp it gently with some tweezers as close to its mouth as possible, the part sticking into your skin. Slowly pull the tick straight out-do not jerk or twist. Keep the tick.
- Check the bite area for two weeks, if a red rash appears, see your doctor, and take the tick with you.
- Do not use matches, cigarettes, or Vaseline on the tick, as this may cause an infected tick to pump bacteria into the skin.

## Treatment of Lyme disease.

Lyme disease can be effectively treated with antibiotics. Full recovery is more likely when treatment starts early.

Tip of the Week:

If you are traveling in a high risk area, before you come indoors, check the children first, pets next, and you last.