

Only blacklegged ticks/ deer ticks carry Lyme disease

There are areas in Ontario that are considered high risk with an established tick population.

Please visit www.niagararegion.ca for a list of these high risk areas.

This information is intended to provide general health-related information about Lyme disease.

It is not intended to replace medical consultation by your physician and/or other health care professionals.

Sources:

Red Book, 2009.

28th Edition, American Academy of Pediatrics.

Control of Communicable Diseases Manual, 19th Edition, David L. Heymann.

MOHLTC, www.health.gov.on.ca (Lyme disease page) 2010

Images Courtesy of R. Lindsay, Public Health Agency of Canada

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Rd. Atlanta, GA 30333, USA

Ticks and Lyme Disease



ONE INCH

Blacklegged Tick



Lone Star Tick



Dog Tick



For more information:

Niagara Region Public Health
2201 St. David's Rd., Campbell East
Thorold, ON

905-688-8248 ext. 7767
or 1-888-505-6074

Fort Erie: 905-871-6513
Niagara Falls: 905-356-1538
Welland: 905-735-5697

Niagara  Region

www.niagararegion.ca

Niagara  Region

What is Lyme disease?

Lyme disease is an infection that can be caused by a bite from a blacklegged tick infected with bacteria. Blacklegged ticks are tiny bugs the size of a sesame seed and do not fly. They are found on the ground, in tall grass and bushes, and they attach themselves to animals and humans passing by. The risk of getting bitten by a tick is greatest from spring to fall, but ticks can be present during mild winters.



What should I do if I spot a tick on my skin?

- Remove the tick by using tweezers. Grab the tick as close to the skin as possible. Gently pull the tick straight out until the tick releases its hold on the skin.
- Do not squeeze, twist, or crush, the tick while removing it
- Place the tick in a screw top bottle and bring it to Public Health to be identified. Only blacklegged ticks will be sent to the lab to be tested for Lyme disease.
- Use soap and water to clean the spot where you were bitten. Disinfect the area with rubbing alcohol.
- Clean your hands
- Check your body thoroughly, including the groin area, armpits and hairline. It's not unusual to have more than one tick attached. Tick bites are usually painless, so they are easy to go unnoticed.

How do I prevent a tick bite?

- Wear light coloured clothing. This will help you to spot ticks more easily.
- Wear long sleeved shirts and pants when walking in wooded and bushy areas
- To help keep ticks away from your bare skin; tuck in any loose clothing and wear closed footwear. Use insect repellent with DEET on exposed skin and clothing. Always follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Ticks brought into the house on clothing can result in a tick bite later because they can survive off of the body. Wash clothing and place in the dryer.
- Keep your lawn cut to reduce high grass or leaf litter where ticks can live

How is Lyme disease spread?

Not all blacklegged ticks carry the bacteria that causes Lyme disease. Ticks get the bacteria from feeding on infected mice, chipmunks, and birds. Cats and dogs can get Lyme disease, but cannot spread it to humans. Pets can carry infected ticks into your home so check your pets regularly. Lyme disease is not spread from person to person.



What are the symptoms of Lyme disease?

Early symptoms of Lyme disease usually occur within one to two weeks, but can occur as soon as three days or as long as a month after a tick bite. If you develop: fever, headache, muscle and joint pains, fatigue and a skin rash, especially one that looks like a red bull's eye, promptly seek medical advice.

Is there treatment?

Medical attention should be sought if symptoms develop within 30 days of removal of the tick. It is important to tell your doctor when and the geographical location of where you were bitten. If symptoms of Lyme disease develop, antibiotics should prevent further complications. The earlier the treatment is received the better.