



Ticks

Preventing ticks in the yard

Apply Pesticides Outdoors to Control Ticks

Use of pesticides can reduce the number of ticks in treated areas of your yard. However, you should not rely on spraying to reduce your risk of infection.

When using pesticides, always follow label instructions. Before spraying, check with local health or agricultural officials about:

- The best time to apply pesticide in your area
- The best type of pesticide to use
- Rules and regulations regarding pesticide application on residential properties

Create a Tick-safe Zone to Reduce Blacklegged Ticks in the Yard

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station has developed a comprehensive Tick Management Handbook [\[PDF – 84 pages\]](#) [\[↗\]](#) for preventing tick bites. Here are some simple landscaping techniques that can help reduce blacklegged tick populations:

- Remove leaf litter.
- Clear tall grasses and brush around homes and at the edge of lawns.
- Place a 3-ft wide barrier of wood chips or gravel between lawns and wooded areas to restrict tick migration into recreational areas.
- Mow the lawn frequently.
- Stack wood neatly and in a dry area (discourages rodents).
- Keep playground equipment, decks, and patios away from yard edges and trees.
- Discourage unwelcome animals (such as deer, raccoons, and stray dogs) from entering your yard by constructing fences.
- Remove old furniture, mattresses, or trash from the yard that may give ticks a place to hide.

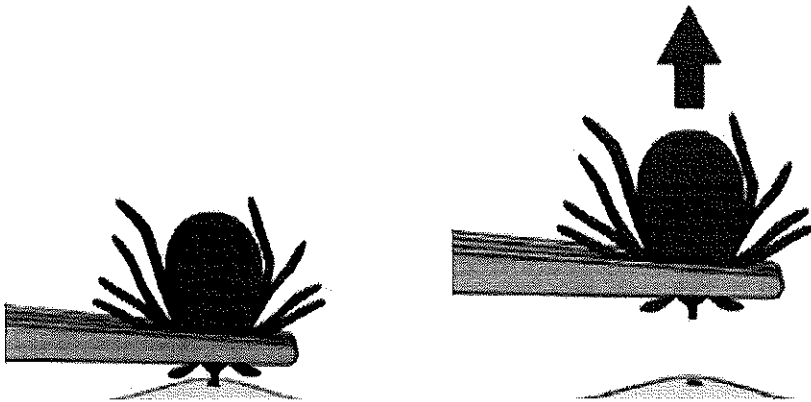
Removing a tick

Testing of ticks

If you find a tick attached to your skin, simply remove the tick as soon as possible. There are several tick removal devices on the market, but a plain set of fine-tipped tweezers works very well.

How to remove a tick

1. Use clean, fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.
2. Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk the tick; this can cause the mouth-parts to break off and remain in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth-parts with tweezers. If you cannot remove the mouth easily with tweezers, leave it alone and let the skin heal.
3. After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol or soap and water.
4. Never crush a tick with your fingers. Dispose of a live tick by
 - Putting it in alcohol,
 - Placing it in a sealed bag/container,
 - Wrapping it tightly in tape, or
 - Flushing it down the toilet.



Follow-up

If you develop a rash or fever within several weeks of removing a tick, see your doctor:

- Tell the doctor about your recent tick bite,
- When the bite occurred, and
- Where you most likely acquired the tick.

People who have removed a tick sometimes wonder if they should have it tested for evidence of infection. Although some commercial groups offer testing, in general this is not recommended because:

- Laboratories that conduct tick testing are not required to have the high standards of quality control used by clinical diagnostic laboratories. Results of tick testing should not be used for treatment decisions.
- Positive results showing that the tick contains a disease-causing organism do not necessarily mean that you have


infected.

- If you have been infected, you will probably develop symptoms before results of the tick test are available. If you do become ill, you should not wait for tick testing results before beginning appropriate treatment.

However, you may want to learn to identify various ticks. Different ticks live in different parts of the country and transmit different diseases.



Avoid folklore remedies such as “painting” the tick with nail polish or petroleum jelly, or using heat to make the tick detach from the skin. Your goal is to remove the tick as quickly as possible—not waiting for it to detach.

[Fact Sheet—What to do after a tick bite](#)  [PDF – 2 pages]

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