



## Prevent Tick Bites

While it is a good idea to take preventive measures against ticks year-round, be extra vigilant in warmer months (April-September) when ticks are most active.

### Avoid Direct Contact with Ticks

- ◆ Walk in the center of trails, rather than through the brush.
- ◆ Control the brush around your home.
- ◆ Avoid wooded and bushy areas with high grass and leaf litter.

### Repel Ticks with DEET or Permethrin

- ◆ Products containing permethrin can be used to treat clothing and gear, such as boots, pants, socks and tents. It remains protective through several washings. Always follow label instructions.
- ◆ Repellents containing 20% or more DEET can be applied to the skin, and they can protect up to several hours. Always follow product instructions! Parents should apply this product to their children, avoiding hands, eyes, and mouth.
- ◆ Other repellents registered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) may be found at: <http://cfpub.epa.gov/oppref/insect>

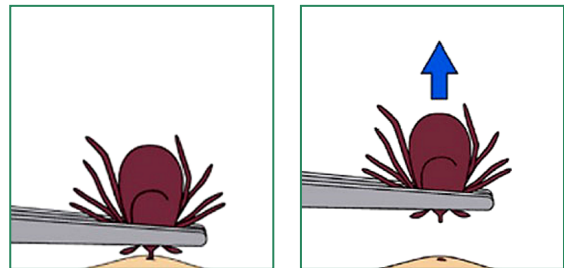
### Find and Remove Ticks from Your Body

- ◆ Wear light colored, tightly woven clothing which will allow the dark tick to be seen more easily. The tight weave makes it harder for the tick to attach itself.
- ◆ Tuck your pant legs into socks or boots and shirt into pants. This can help keep ticks on the outside of your clothing where they can be more easily spotted and removed.
- ◆ Conduct a full-body tick check using a mirror to view all parts of your body upon return from tick-infested areas. Parents should check their children. Look for ticks under arms, in and around ears, inside the belly button, behind knees, between the legs, around the waist, and especially in their hair.
- ◆ Examine gear and pets. Ticks can ride into the home on clothing and pets, then attach to a person later, so carefully examine pets, coats, and day packs. Tumbling clothes in a dryer on the highest heat for at least one hour may help kill remaining ticks.
- ◆ Shower soon after being outdoors. Showering within two hours of coming indoors has been shown to reduce your risk of being bitten by a tick.

## How to Remove a Tick

If you find a tick attached to your skin, there is no need to panic. However, prompt and proper tick removal is important to prevent possible disease transmission.

1. Use fine-tipped tweezers and protect your fingers with a tissue, paper towel, or latex gloves. Avoid removing ticks with your bare hands.
2. Grasp the tick as close to the skin surface as possible and 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 are unable to remove the mouth easily with clean tweezers, leave it alone and let the skin heal.
3. After removing the tick, thoroughly disinfect the bite site and wash your hands with soap and water.



**AVOID** home remedies such as burnt matches, nail polish or Vaseline. These methods may increase the chance of disease transmission.

## Follow-up

If you begin to experience a rash or fever within several weeks of removing a tick, see your doctor. Be sure to tell the doctor about your recent tick bite, when the bite occurred, and where you most likely acquired the tick.

For more information about tick-borne diseases, symptoms, and how to submit a tick for identification, go to: [www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/ts/Zoo/WATickDiseases.htm](http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/ts/Zoo/WATickDiseases.htm)