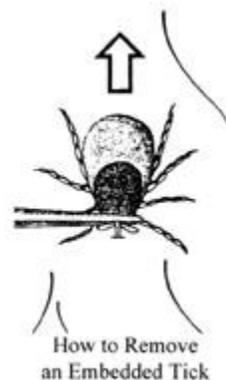




## Preventing Tick Bites and Disease

- Wear protective clothing such as long-sleeved shirts, long trousers, boots or sturdy shoes and a head covering. (Ticks are easier to detect on light-colored clothing.) Tuck pant legs in socks.
- Apply insect repellent containing 10 percent to 30 percent DEET primarily to clothes. Apply sparingly to exposed skin. Do not spray directly to the face; spray the repellent onto hands and then apply to face. Avoid sensitive areas like the eyes, mouth and nasal membranes. Be sure to wash treated skin after coming indoors. Use repellents containing permethrin to treat clothes (especially pants, socks and shoes) but not skin. Always follow label directions; do not misuse or overuse repellents. Always supervise children in the use of repellents.
- Walk in the center of trails so weeds do not brush against you. In camping areas, individuals who sit on the ground or disturb leaf litter on the forest floor may encounter ticks.
- Check yourself, children and other family members every two to three hours for ticks. Most ticks seldom attach quickly and rarely transmit disease organisms until they have been attached four or more hours. If your pets spend time outdoors, check them for ticks, too.
- If ticks are crawling on the outside of clothes, they can be removed with masking tape or cellophane tape. A ring of tape can be made around the hand by leaving the sticky side out and attaching the two ends. Ticks will stick to the tape which can then be folded over and then placed in the trash.
- Remove any tick promptly. The mouthparts of a tick are barbed and may remain embedded and lead to infection at the bite site if not removed promptly. Do not burn the tick with a match or cover it with petroleum jelly or nail polish. Do not use bare hands to remove the tick because tick secretions may carry disease. The best way to remove a tick is to grasp it firmly with tweezers as close to the skin as possible and gently, but firmly, pull it straight out. Do not twist or jerk the tick. If tweezers are not available, grasp the tick with a piece of tissue or cloth or whatever can be used as a barrier between your fingers and the tick. Ticks can be safely disposed of by placing them in a container of soapy water or alcohol, sticking them to tape or flushing them down the toilet. If you want to have the tick identified, put it in a small vial of alcohol.
- Wash the bite area and your hands thoroughly with soap and water and apply an antiseptic to the bite site.
- If you have an unexplained illness with fever, contact a physician. Be sure to tell the physician if you have been outdoors in areas where ticks were present or traveled to areas where tick-borne diseases are common.



*This information is provided courtesy of the Illinois Department of Public Health.*

<http://www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/pccommonticks.htm>

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**Prevention & Control**