









How to Decrease Your Exposure

An Overview of Ticks:

Ticks are a growing health threat throughout Illinois. Although you may be most familiar with the blacklegged deer tick that can transmit Lyme disease, others, such as the Lone Star tick, American dog tick, and Gulf Coast tick, are on the rise and may carry disease-causing pathogens that also impact public health. Each year, approximately 476,000 people contract Lyme disease, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). **Those who work outdoors, including railroad and forestry workers, park rangers, conservation police, landscapers, utility and construction workers, and farmers, are more likely to encounter infected ticks.** Preventing exposure to ticks and recognizing the signs and symptoms of tick-borne diseases can go a long way in keeping outdoor workers safe.

Tick Attachment Times:

Throughout a tick's two- to three-year lifecycle, it'll feed on multiple warm-blooded hosts as its food source. The longer a tick is attached to its host, the greater the risk it transmits an infection. However, the attachment times for tick-borne diseases vary, and some diseases can be transmitted in a matter of minutes. Therefore, **even if a tick is attached for a short time, it's still possible to become infected by a tick-borne disease.** Learning to identify ticks and the pathogens they may carry can help workers seek appropriate medical intervention.

Identify TICKS			Lyme disease	Babesiosis	Tick-Borne Relapsing Fever (TBRF)	Rickettsiosis	Ehrlichiosis	Anaplasmosis	Tularemia	Powassan	STARI	Heartland Virus	Colorado Tick Fever
American Dog Tick	<i>Dermacentor variabilis</i>					✓			✓				
Brown Dog Tick	<i>Rhipicephalus sanguineus</i>			✓		✓	✓						
Eastern Blacklegged Tick	<i>Ixodes scapularis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Gulf Coast Tick	<i>Amblyomma maculatum</i>			✓									
Lone Star Tick	<i>Amblyomma americanum</i>				✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	
Western Blacklegged Tick	<i>Ixodes pacificus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Rocky Mountain Wood Tick	<i>Dermacentor andersoni</i>					✓			✓				✓
Soft Ticks	<i>Ornithodoros</i>				✓								

Places to Find Ticks

- » Ticks have been found throughout Illinois and may reside in outdoor and residential worksites in rural, suburban, and urban areas.
- » Hospitable tick environments include:
 - Wooded areas, piles of leaf litter, unkempt grass, and brushy areas
- » Habits with deer, raccoons, rodents, and other animals. Ticks are most active in the spring and summer but can be active any time of year, particularly when temperatures remain above freezing.

» To protect yourself:

- Wear light-colored clothing.
- Treat clothes and gear (when appropriate) with permethrin.
- Tuck pants into socks.
- Wear tall boots treated with permethrin.
- Wear a hat or hooded sweatshirt.
- Use repellent spray — picaridin or 40% DEET or higher.
- Check clothing and gear and use a lint roller.
- Throw clothing in the dryer on high heat for 15 to 20 minutes.
- Take a shower.
- Perform a head-to-toe tick check.

How to Remove a Tick:

- Do not squeeze or twist the tick
- Do not cover the tick with any substance, including essential oils, soap, or oil
- Do not burn with a match

Attempts to burn or smother the tick may cause the tick to regurgitate bacteria, increasing the chances of infection.

Instead, do the following:

1. With fine-tipped tweezers, grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible.
2. Pull upward with firm, even pressure.
3. If the head remains in the skin, see if you can pull it out but don't dig and rip the skin.
4. Clean the bite area.
5. Keep the tick! It can be tested. Place it in a sealable bag to send it to a tick testing site. Do not crush it.

Check the rest of your body for more ticks.

Where to send a tick for testing:

Results in 3 days: tickreport.com

Results in 24 hours: ticknology.org

There is a fee for tick testing. Follow company directions for mailing. Tick testing is not to be used as diagnostic, however, it is a helpful tool.

Get FREE tick identification through INHS Medical Entomology Lab.

Visit: medical-entomology.inhs.illinois.edu/research/free-tick-identifications/

Symptoms of Tick-borne Diseases

The initial symptoms of Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases may be general and flu-like in nature. If you've been bitten by a tick or been in a hospitable tick environment or near tick-carrying animals, remain vigilant for the following symptoms:

- Rashes — when present, a bullseye rash (erythema migrans or EM rash) is a telltale symptom of a Lyme disease infection.
- Not everyone gets a rash. Estimates range from 30% to 80% of those infected.
- Fatigue
- Fever or chills
- Headaches
- Muscle and joint pain
- Overall unwell feeling

Contact your health care provider if you develop these symptoms after a tick bite or after being in a hospitable tick environment.

Workers' Rights by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

Workers have the right to:

- Working conditions that do not pose a risk of serious harm.
- Receive information and training (in a language and vocabulary the worker understands) about workplace hazards, methods to prevent them, and the OSHA standards that apply to their workplace.
- Review records of work-related injuries and illnesses.
- File a complaint asking OSHA to inspect their workplace if they believe there is a serious hazard or that their employer is not following OSHA's rules. OSHA will keep all identities confidential.
- Exercise their rights under the law without retaliation, including reporting an injury or raising health and safety concerns with their employer or OSHA. If a worker has been retaliated against for using their rights, they must file a complaint with OSHA as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days. For more information, visit www.osha.gov or call OSHA at 1-800-321-OSHA (6742), TTY 1-877-889-5627.

For more information, visit: illymeassociation.org



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