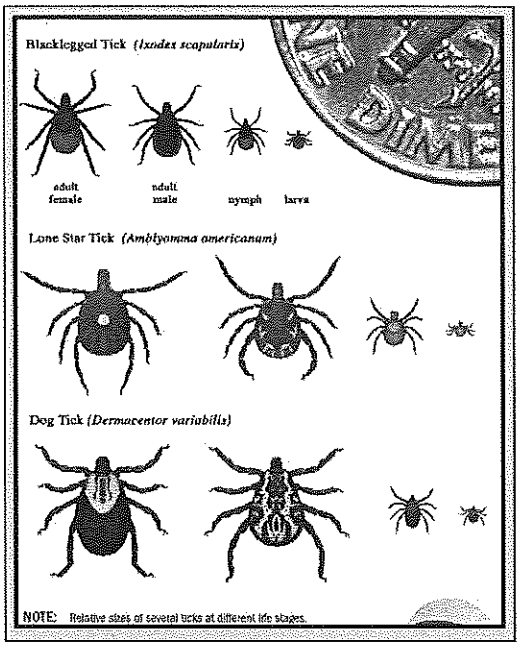
Parent Letter: Don't Let a Tick Make Your Child Sick!

DEAR PARENTS,

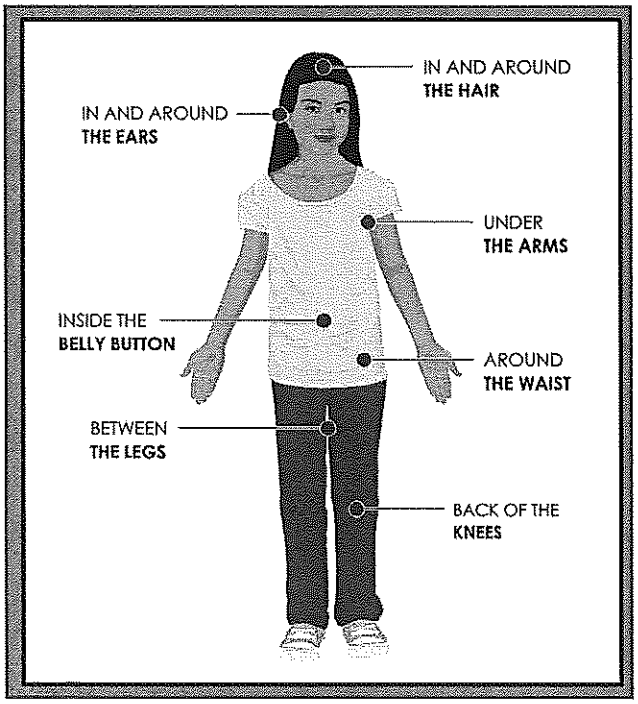
During warm weather months ticks are more likely to feed on humans. In order to protect you and your child from the diseases that ticks can spread, we are providing you with this resource to learn about ticks and tick prevention.



What to know about ticks:

- Common ticks found in New Jersey include the black-legged "deer" tick, the Lone Star tick, and the dog tick.
- Ticks can carry various diseases; the most common is Lyme disease, carried by deer ticks.
- Lyme disease is caused by bacteria that are spread to a human through a tick bite.
- Ticks like **dark, damp areas** such as long grass and brush and are often carried by animals such as pets.

Here's how you can help your child to avoid tick-borne illnesses:



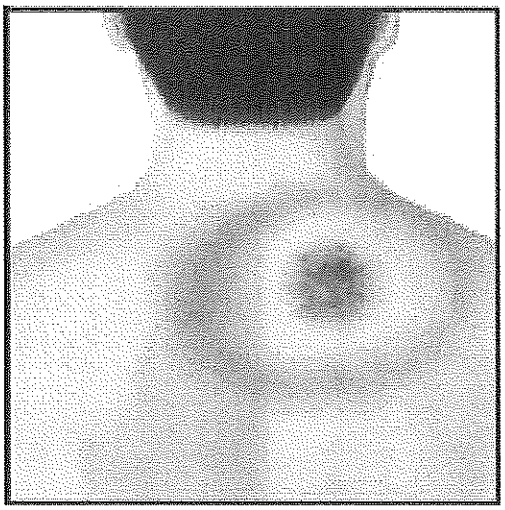
- Help them dress appropriately by wearing **light-colored clothes with long sleeves** and **tucking their pants into their socks** to avoid a tick crawling into these gaps.
- Apply **an EPA registered insect repellent** ideally with at least 20% DEET and treat clothing (or buy pre-treated clothing) with permethrin.
- Limit outdoor play to sunlit areas away from the woods.
- After coming inside, remind them to **shower as soon as possible**.
- **Place clothes in a hot dryer** for at least 10 minutes before washing to kill ticks.
- Perform a **tick check** after being outdoors and be sure to check in crevices such as their elbows, behind their ears, between their legs, behind their knees, in their hair, etc.

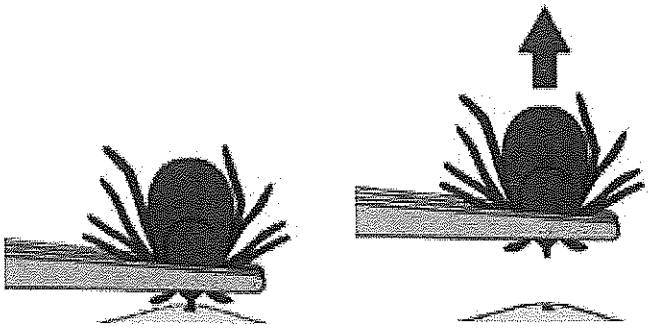
If you find an attached tick:

- Remove **only** with fine-point tweezers.
- Grasp the tick **by the head**, as close to the skin as possible, and pull the tick straight out with constant force.
- **Wash the skin** with rubbing alcohol or soap and water and save the tick in rubbing alcohol in a sealed plastic bag or container in case you need to show a doctor.
- Know that a tick must be attached for **36-48 hours** to transmit most diseases.
- Be on the lookout for signs that appear in the time period listed below after the tick bite. Some examples include **a rash or flu-like symptoms**. If you notice either of these or other signs, your child may have a tick-borne illness and you should contact your health care provider.
- If you find a deer tick that has been **attached for at least 36 hours**, consult your health care provider.

Please refer to chart below for the diseases that are transmitted in NJ and how soon symptoms will occur after a tick bite for each, if infected.

Lyme disease	3-30 days
Ehrlichiosis	7-14 days
Anaplasmosis	7-14 days
Spotted Fever Group Rickettsiosis	2-14 days
Babesiosis	7-63+ days
Powassan	7-30 days





More information can be found at:

www.cdc.gov/ticks and https://nj.gov/health/cd/topics/lyme.shtml

Use https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/find-repellent-right-you to find a repellent that suits your needs.

All images are sourced from www.cdc.gov

Checking for Ticks

Reduce your chances of getting a tick-borne disease by checking your body for ticks after being outdoors. Use a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body.

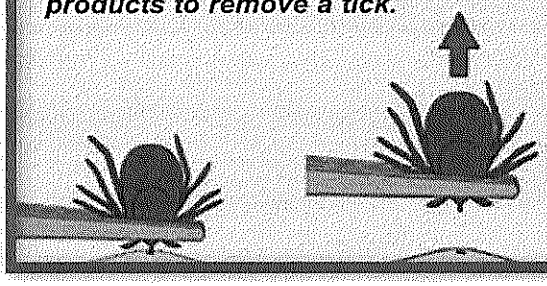
Be sure to check these parts of your body:

- Under the arms
- In/around the ears
- Inside belly button
- Back of the knees
- In/around the hair
- Between the legs
- Around the waist
- On the scalp

What to Do if You Find a Tick

1. Using fine-tipped tweezers, grab the tick close to the skin. Do not twist or jerk the tick, as this may cause the mouthparts to break off and remain in the skin.
2. With a steady motion, gently pull straight up until all parts of the tick are removed.
3. After removing the tick, clean your skin with soap and warm water.
4. Contact a healthcare provider if you develop symptoms of tick-borne disease.

Do not use petroleum jelly, hot matches, nail polish remover, or other products to remove a tick.



Where Can I Find More Information?

New Jersey Department of Health Communicable Disease Service: Vector-Borne Illness
www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/vectorborne.shtml

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Tick-Borne Disease
www.cdc.gov/ticks/diseases

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Stop Ticks
www.cdc.gov/features/stopticks

New Jersey Department of Health
Communicable Disease Service
PO Box 369
Trenton, NJ 08625
(609) 826-4872

May 2022 **C2863**

Tick-Borne DISEASES

TICK-BORNE DISEASES

What are Tick-borne Diseases?

Tick-borne diseases are illnesses that can be spread to humans by the bite of an infected tick. The most common tick-borne diseases in New Jersey are:

- Anaplasmosis
- Babesiosis
- Ehrlichiosis
- Lyme disease
- Spotted Fever Group Rickettsioses (includes Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever)

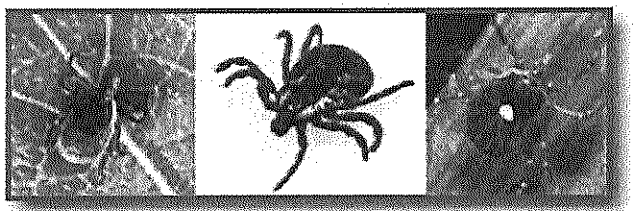
How do Tick-borne Diseases spread?

Ticks become infected when feeding on small infected mammals such as white-footed mice and voles. An infected tick can then infect a person through a tick bite. It is possible to be infected with more than one tick-borne disease at the same time.

Disease-causing Ticks in NJ

These are common ticks in New Jersey that may spread disease to humans:

- Black-legged "deer" tick (Ixodes scapularis) can transmit Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, babesiosis and Powassan disease
- American dog tick (Dermacentor variabilis) can transmit Rocky Mountain spotted fever and tularemia
- Lone star tick (Amblyomma americanum) can transmit ehrlichiosis and tularemia.



Black-legged "deer" tick | American dog tick | Lone star tick

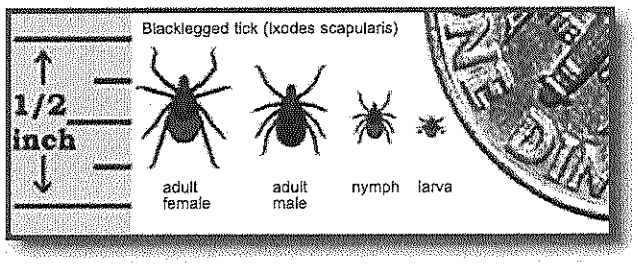
What are the Symptoms of Tick-borne Diseases?

Early signs of tick-borne diseases can include:

- Skin rash
- Tiredness
- Fever/chills
- Headache
- Stiff neck
- Muscle aches
- Joint pain
- Dizziness

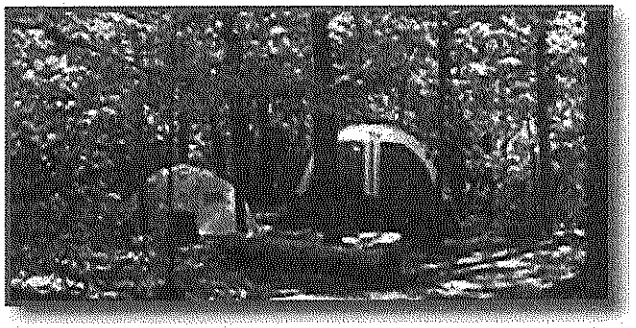
How Soon After a Tick Bite do Symptoms Occur?

Anaplasmosis	**7-14 days**
Babesiosis	**7-63+ days**
Ehrlichiosis	**7-14 days**
Lyme disease	**3-30 days**
Rocky Mt. Spotted Fever	**2-14 days**



What is the Treatment for Tick-borne Diseases?

Most tick-borne diseases (Lyme disease, ehrlichiosis, anaplasmosis, and Rocky Mountain spotted fever) are caused by bacteria and can be treated with antibiotics. Babesiosis is caused by a parasite similar to malaria, and a healthcare provider may prescribe medication. It is important to check for symptoms and talk to a healthcare provider if you've been bitten by a tick. Early treatment can be very effective.



Who Gets Tick-borne Diseases?

Anyone who is bitten by an infected tick may get a tick-borne disease. People who spend a lot of time outdoors, especially from April to September, have a greater risk of becoming infected.

How are Tick-borne Diseases Diagnosed?

Most tick-borne diseases are diagnosed through blood tests and by discussing symptoms with a healthcare provider.

How to Prevent Tick-Borne Diseases

✓ DEET ✓ Showers ✓ Tick Checks

- Know where ticks are: ticks live in or near wooded or grassy areas. Always walk in the center of trails to avoid contact with ticks.
- Keep your yard clean: mow lawns, clear brush and remove leaf litter.
- Apply insecticides: use EPA-registered repellent with DEET on skin and permethrin on clothing, boots and camping gear.
- Cover up: wear long sleeves and pants tucked into socks to prevent ticks from getting under clothes.
- Shower: showering can help find and wash off unattached ticks.
- Inspect: check your body for ticks.

Invasive Meningococcal Disease

NJ Health
New Jersey Department of Health

Frequently Asked Questions

What is invasive meningococcal disease?

Meningococcal (muh-nin-jo-cok-ul) disease is a serious illness caused by a type of bacteria (germs) called *Neisseria meningitidis*. The disease may result in inflammation of the lining of the brain and spinal cord (meningococcal meningitis) and/or a serious blood infection (meningococcal septicemia). Meningococcal disease can become deadly in 48 hours or less. Even with treatment, 10-15% of people die. Others have long-term complications such as brain damage, learning problems, skin scarring, hearing loss, and loss of arms and/or legs.

Who gets invasive meningococcal disease?

Although it can occur in people of all ages, infants, preteens, teens, and young adults have the highest rates of invasive meningococcal disease in the United States. College students and military recruits are also slightly more at risk for the disease because of time spent in crowded living conditions like dorms or barracks. People with certain medical conditions or immune system disorders including a damaged or removed spleen are also at higher risk.

How do people get invasive meningococcal disease?

The bacteria are spread from person-to-person through the exchange of saliva (spit), coughs, and sneezes. You must be in direct (close) or lengthy contact with an infected person's secretions to be exposed. Examples of close contact include:

- Kissing
- Sharing items that come in contact with the mouth (water bottles, eating utensils, cigarettes and smoking materials, cosmetics (lip balm)
- Living in the same house
- Sleeping in the same residence (sleep overs)

About 1 out of 10 people carry meningococcal bacteria in their nose and throat, but don't get sick. These people are known as carriers. Although carriers do not have any signs or symptoms, they can still spread the bacteria and make others sick. Since so many people carry the bacteria, most cases of invasive meningococcal disease appear to be random and are not linked to other cases.

Can people with invasive meningococcal disease pass the illness to others?

The infectious period for meningococcal disease is considered to be from 7 days before the person got sick to 1 day after he or she starts on antibiotics. This means that people who were in **close** contact with the sick person during this time are at higher than average risk to get invasive meningococcal disease.

People who are identified as **close** contacts should receive antibiotics to prevent them from getting the disease, regardless of vaccination status. The bacteria are **NOT SPREAD** by casual contact activities like being in the same work or school room as the sick person. The bacteria that cause invasive meningococcal disease are less infectious than the viruses that cause the common cold or flu.

What are the symptoms of invasive meningococcal disease?

- Confusion
- Fatigue (feeling very tired)
- Fever and chills
- In later stages, a dark purple rash

- Nausea and vomiting
- Rapid breathing
- Sensitivity to light
- Severe headache
- Stiff neck

How is invasive meningococcal disease diagnosed?

A health care provider diagnoses invasive meningococcal disease by obtaining the history of symptoms, performing a physical examination, and examining blood and spinal fluid.

What is the treatment for invasive meningococcal disease?

It is important that treatment be started as soon as possible. Most people with meningococcal disease are hospitalized and treated with antibiotics. It is very important to finish your antibiotics even if you begin to feel better, unless otherwise directed by your health care provider. Depending on the severity of the infection, other treatments may also be necessary. These can include such things as breathing support, medications to treat low blood pressure, and wound care for parts of the body with damaged skin.

How can invasive meningococcal disease be prevented?

The best way to prevent meningococcal disease is to get vaccinated. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends meningococcal vaccination for the following:

- All preteens and teens
- Children at increased risk for meningococcal disease
- Adults at increased risk for meningococcal disease

Visit CDC to learn more about meningococcal vaccination.

Where can I get additional information?

- Your health care provider
- Your local health department
  localhealth.nj.gov
- NJ Department of Health website
  nj.gov/health/cd
- Protect Me With 3+
  protectmewith3.com
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
  (CDC)
  cdc.gov/meningococcal

This information is intended for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace consultation with a health care professional. Adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Revised 1/24