



Lifespan Physician Group, Inc.

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Lifespan Lyme Disease Center

Avoiding Lyme: Prevention and How to Remove an Embedded Tick

Prevention: Protect yourself against Ticks

You can encounter ticks almost anywhere while outdoors, mostly during the summer months. They can climb onto clothing, backpacks, pets and people. Here are some tips to avoid being bitten by a tick:

- Avoid areas with high grass and leaf litter.
- Wear clothing protected with permethrin. Visit http://tickencounter.org/prevention/insect_shield_your_own_clothes for information about a service that will make your clothes tick repellent or a DIY recipe!
- Use bug spray with 20-30% DEET.
- Consider spraying your yard with acaricides (tick pesticides).
- Shower after being outdoors and search yourself for ticks.
- Check your pets for ticks. Even if they are protected by a veterinary prescribed medication, they may still carry loose ticks that can infect you.
- **Ask your doctor about a one or two dose prescription for 200mg of Doxycycline if you have found an attached tick.** This is called antimicrobial prophylaxis and it can prevent Lyme disease. See our study review section for more information about the efficacy of antimicrobial prophylaxis with Doxycycline.

How to Remove an Embedded Tick:

The good news is that an infected tick must be embedded for 24 to 36 hours before a person can contract a tick-borne illness. This means that the methods above should prove very effective at preventing illness. If you find a tick, follow these steps to remove it. Be wary of other tick removal methods—the method below is the safest and most effective way to remove a tick.

1. Ticks can be very small! Use tweezers with a pointed end (not a flat end) to remove the tick. This reduces the risk of breaking the tick apart while trying to remove it.
2. Grab the tick as close to the skin as possible, preferably at the tick's head or right above it.
3. Pull the tick upward slowly and steadily to avoid breaking the tick.

4. Disinfect the area with soap and water. Even if the tick head is embedded, it cannot transmit illness without the body.
5. If the head is still embedded, attempt to remove the head with tweezers. If you are unable to remove it, leave it and the skin will heal.

For a helpful video on tick removal strategies

visit: http://tickencounter.org/prevention/how_to_remove_a_tick_video

Tick Disposal Options:

- Submerge it in alcohol.
- Place it in a sealed bag or container.
- Flush it down the toilet.

If you develop a fever or rash in the weeks following the tick bite, see a doctor and be sure to tell them when and where you acquired the bite.

Works Cited

"Prevention." *Tickencounter.org*. University of Rhode Island, 2016. Web. 28 June 2016.

<<http://tickencounter.org/prevention>>.

"Ticks." *Cdc.gov*. Centers for Disease Control, 14 June 2016. Web. 28 June 2016.

<<http://www.cdc.gov/ticks/index.html>>.