

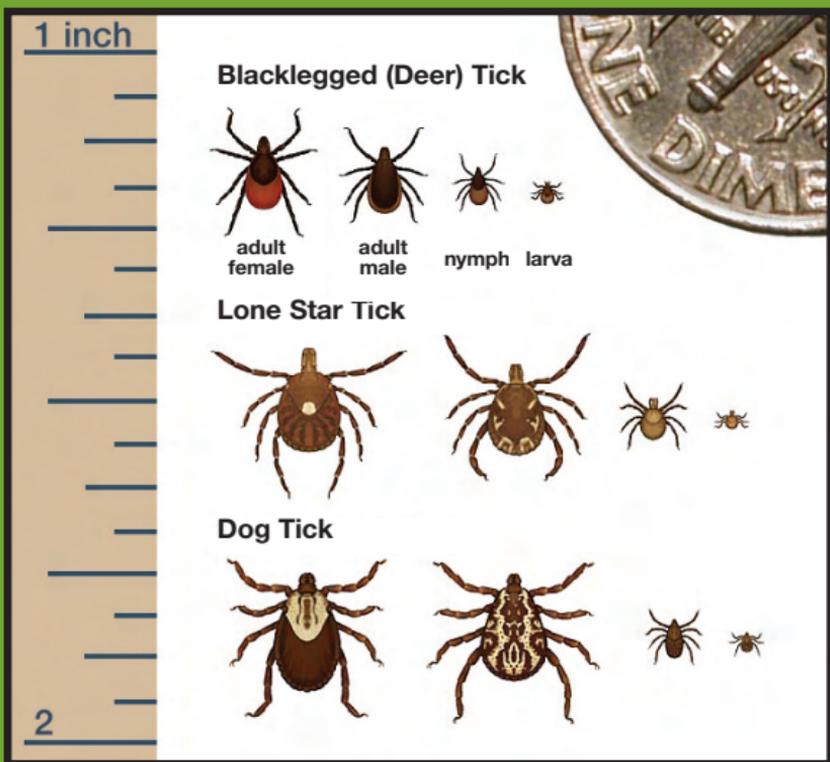
# How to Prevent Tick Bites



# What Is a Tick?

A tick is a small brown bug that attaches to the skin of a person or animal. It feeds by sucking blood. It can be as small as a poppy seed or as large as a sunflower seed.

The most common ticks that spread disease in the Northeast are the blacklegged (or deer) tick, lone star tick and American dog tick.



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# Where Do Ticks Live?

Ticks live in grassy, wooded areas. The American dog tick is common in New York City. Blacklegged (or deer) and lone star ticks are more common outside the city. Blacklegged ticks are often found on Long Island and in upstate New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.

# Diseases Spread by Ticks

**Lyme disease** is spread by the blacklegged (or deer) tick. Several thousand people get Lyme disease every year, including about 400 in New York City. Symptoms appear three to 30 days after being bitten by an infected tick. They may include a “bull’s-eye” rash around the bite, joint pain, fever, chills, muscle aches and tiredness.



**Babesiosis** is another infection spread by the blacklegged tick. Symptoms include fever, chills, sweating, muscle aches, tiredness and anemia.

**Anaplasmosis** is also spread by the blacklegged tick. Symptoms include fever, headache, tiredness, muscle aches, nausea, vomiting, cough and joint pain.

**Ehrlichiosis** is spread by the lone star tick. Symptoms are similar to anaplasmosis.

**Rocky Mountain spotted fever** is spread by the American dog tick, which is common in New York City. This means that people can get the disease locally. Symptoms include fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, muscle aches and a spotted rash on the body, often including the palms and soles.

# Treatment

Most tick-related illnesses are treated with antibiotics. Early diagnosis and treatment can help prevent complications. If you've been to a tick-infested area and develop a rash or flu-like symptoms, see your doctor right away.

## Avoiding Tick Bites

- Stay away from grassy, wooded or brushy areas. Stick to cleared paths or the center of trails.
- Wear long-sleeved light colored shirts and long pants tucked into socks. This helps keep ticks away from your skin and makes them easier to see on your clothes.
- When returning from tick-infested areas, carefully check yourself, your children and your pets for ticks.
- Use insect repellent containing DEET. Be sure to follow the product instructions.
- Keep grass cut and remove leaf litter, brush and weeds to reduce ticks around the home.
- Speak to your veterinarian about tick protection for your pets.



# How to Remove a Tick

**1**

Remove the attached tick as soon as possible. The sooner you remove it, the less chance of infection.

**2**



Use tweezers to grasp the tick at the surface of the skin.

**3**

With a steady motion, gently pull the tick out.

**4**

Wash the bite area with soap and warm water or wipe it with a disinfectant.

**5**

If you develop a rash or flu-like symptoms, see your doctor right away.

For more information about ticks  
and preventing tick bites,  
**call 311** or visit **nyc.gov/health**.