

Tick Safety

While ticks are present year-round, they're most active in warmer months (April–September). Here in New Hampshire, ticks have been particularly bad this year, so it's a good time to review how to protect yourself and your loved ones from ticks and the diseases they carry.

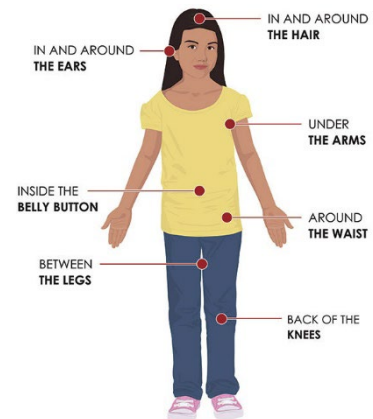
Ticks thrive in grassy, bushy, and wooded areas, as well as on animals, especially deer and rodents. If you're hiking, hunting, or even just enjoying your yard, be aware of tick-prone spots.

- On hiking trails, walk in the center to avoid brushing against vegetation where ticks may be waiting.
- Keep your grass short, clear leaf litter, and create a 3-foot barrier of gravel or mulch between wooded areas and recreational spaces. Keep decks, patios, and play equipment away from the edges of your yard where ticks are more common.
- Use EPA-registered repellents like DEET, Picaridin, IR3535, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (OLE), PMD, or 2-Undecanone. Apply sunscreen first, then repellent.
 - [Find the right repellent \(EPA\)](#)
 - [CDC's "Fight the Bite" chatbot for repellent advice](#)
- Treat clothing & gear with Permethrin (an insect-repellent chemical). You can buy pre-treated clothing or apply it yourself (follow instructions carefully and dry in a well-ventilated area).

Dress to avoid ticks. Wear light-colored clothing that makes ticks easier to spot. Tuck your pants into your socks and your shirt into your pants to block ticks from crawling under clothing. Choose long sleeves and pants when in grassy or wooded areas.

After being outdoors:

- Do a full-body tick check (see CDC graphic below for key areas).
- Shower within 2 hours to wash off unattached ticks.
- Inspect pets and gear. Ticks can hitch a ride indoors and bite later.
- Wash clothes in hot water for at least 10 minutes. Cold water won't kill ticks.



To remove a tick safely:

- Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible.
- Pull straight up with steady pressure (don't twist or crush it).
- Clean the bite area with soap and water or rubbing alcohol.
- Save the tick in a sealed bag or container, in case you need ID/testing later.

After a bite, monitor for:

- Rash, especially a "bullseye" pattern, which is a sign of Lyme disease.
- Fever, chills, fatigue, muscle/joint pain.
- Headache or swollen lymph nodes.
- If symptoms appear, see a doctor promptly and mention the tick bite.

