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**The Centers for Disease Control  
and Prevention**  
[www.cdc.gov/lyme/](http://www.cdc.gov/lyme/)

**The New York State Department of Health**  
[www.health.ny.gov/diseases/  
communicable/lyme](http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/lyme)

**The Thangamani Lab at SUNY Upstate  
Medical University**  
[www.thangamani-lab.com](http://www.thangamani-lab.com)



**WHAT TO DO IF YOU THINK  
YOU HAVE BEEN BITTEN**

If you think you have been bitten by a tick,  
ask yourself:

Did I visit an area with a high tick  
population or where Lyme and other  
contagions are present?

Am I sick with a cold or could it be  
something else? Do I have a rash?

Continue to monitor your symptoms. It can  
take up to 30 days for symptoms to appear.

Call your healthcare provider if you have  
a fever, chills, headache, fatigue, muscle  
and joint aches, and swollen lymph nodes,  
which may occur in the absence of a rash.

Be sure to tell your provider when and  
where you believe the tick bite happened.  
A blood test can confirm exposure to the  
bacteria, but diagnosis and treatment  
require complete information.

Lyme disease is difficult to diagnose and  
can mimic other illnesses. Left untreated,  
Lyme disease can affect the joints, heart, or  
nervous system.

Pay special attention to reoccurring  
symptoms. You can get Lyme disease again  
if you are bitten by another tick.



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#612  
6/2025

**SAFEGUARD YOUR HEALTH**

KNOW THE FACTS ABOUT

# LYME DISEASE

AND OTHER  
TICK-BORNE  
ILLNESSES



FROM SENATOR  
**JAKE ASHBY**  
43RD SENATE DISTRICT



## WHAT IS LYME DISEASE?

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection transmitted by the blacklegged tick. The bacteria is one of 16 tick-borne pathogens the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is tracking in the U.S.; six appear in New York. Lyme disease can affect the skin, joints, nervous system, and/or heart. Many diseases are regionally isolated; others are carried by certain ticks and appear at certain elevations.

Many of these diseases produce symptoms similar to Lyme disease. Some can be fatal to vulnerable populations, or in very rare circumstances.

### BLACKLEGGED TICK (DEER TICK)

The blacklegged tick is the transmitter of Lyme disease in New York State.



### AMERICAN DOG TICK

The American dog tick may carry Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF). Fewer than 50 cases are reported annually in New York State.

RMSF is a serious illness and can be fatal.

### LONE STAR TICK

The lone star tick has been found in parts of New York. It can spread diseases such as Southern Tick-Associated Rash Illness (STARI), ehrlichiosis, Heartland virus, Bourbon virus, and red meat allergy.



## HOW IS LYME DISEASE SPREAD?

- The bacteria *Borrelia burgdorferi* causes Lyme disease.
- The bacteria is transmitted from an infected animal to humans through the bite and saliva of the blacklegged tick.
- The blacklegged tick can spread it throughout its life cycle. The tick's life cycle averages two years.

Lyme disease is the most commonly reported vector-borne illness in the U.S. In 2023, 89,000 cases were reported. New York State reported more Lyme disease cases than any other state.

## SOMETIMES TICKS COME TO YOU

Pet fur is a tick magnet, bringing ticks into your home. Pets can be vaccinated against Lyme disease. Owners cannot. Consult with your veterinarian about protecting your pets. It will also protect you.



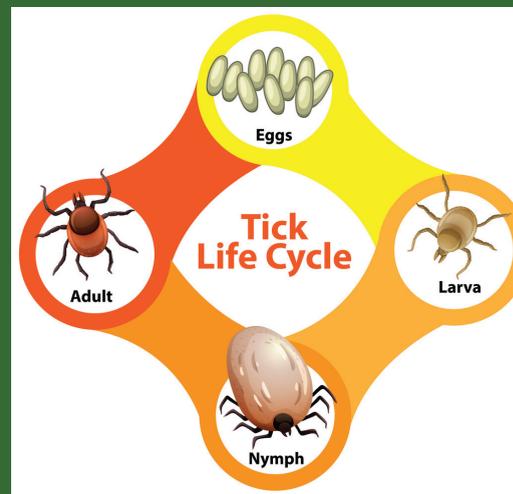
## TICK HABITAT

Ticks prefer wooded areas and adjacent grasslands. They also inhabit lawns and gardens at the edge of the woods. Ticks feed on wild animals such as mice, deer, and birds. These hosts transport ticks and the bacteria that causes Lyme disease.



## IS THERE A TICK SEASON?

Most tick encounters occur from April through November. However, ticks are active in all temperatures above freezing. As the climate changes, the geographic range of ticks and the reach of diseases they carry expand. This has attracted researchers to New York State.



## HOW CAN I PREVENT TICK BITES?

Awareness and limiting exposure remain the most effective ways of combating transmission of tick-borne disease.

Ticks do not jump or fly. They perch on vegetation and grab animals upon contact. Here are some steps you can take to reduce your risk:

- Stay on the center of trails and paths.
- Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts; tuck the legs into your socks or boots.
- Wear light-colored and tightly woven clothing. This makes it easier to see ticks.
- Repellents are effective against ticks (picardin, IR3535, DEET); other compounds (permethrin) can be applied to clothing. Always follow product instructions.
- Check yourself, your children, and pets at least once per day for ticks. Mind the backs of knees, behind the ears, the scalp, armpits, and back.
- For a plant-based alternative to repellents, try oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE).

## HOW DO I REMOVE A TICK?

The right way to remove a tick is the safe way. Don't burn, smother, or agitate it.

- Use fine point tweezers or a tick tool.
- Grasp the base of the head, as close to the skin as possible.
- Gently pull up until the whole tick detaches (don't crush it!).
- Use rubbing alcohol to clean the bite and/or kill the tick.

### THE SOONER THE BETTER!

Transmission times for tick-borne diseases vary. The sooner a tick is removed, the lower the risk of infection.