



SAFETY UNLIMITED, INC.

Weekly Safety Meeting

Ticks

Ticks are small arachnids that bite to fasten themselves onto the skin and feed on blood. Ticks live in the fur and feathers of many animals and birds.

There are many kinds of ticks in the United States and they can be found in virtually any area of the country.

Tick bites occur most often during early spring to late summer and in areas where there are many wild animals and birds. It is important to avoid areas where ticks are found and prevent tick bites to avoid contracting the diseases they carry.

Tick-borne pathogens can be passed to humans by the bite of infected ticks. Ticks can be infected with bacteria, viruses, or parasites. Some of the most common tick-borne diseases in the United States include:

Lyme disease, babesiosis, ehrlichiosis, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, anaplasmosis, southern tick-Associated rash illness, tick-borne relapsing fever, and tularemia. Other tick-borne diseases in the United States include: Colorado tick fever, powassan encephalitis, and Q fever.

Lyme disease is the most commonly reported tick-borne disease in the United States. In 2017, more than 22,500 confirmed and 7,500 probable cases of Lyme disease were reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Most of these diseases come with flu-like symptoms after getting bit. Symptoms may begin from 1 day to 3 weeks after the tick bite. Sometimes a rash or sore appears along with the flu-like symptoms. If you are bitten by a tick or display these symptoms after being in an area where ticks are found, go to the doctor. Early diagnosis and antibiotics can result in a full recovery from these diseases.

Outdoor workers are at risk of exposure to tick-borne diseases if they work at sites with ticks. Worksites with woods, bushes, high grass, or leaf litter are likely to have more ticks. Outdoor workers in most regions of the United States should be extra careful to protect themselves in the spring, summer, and fall when ticks are most active. Ticks may be active all year in some regions with warmer weather.

Early signs and symptoms (3 to 30 days after tick bite):

- Fever, chills, headache, fatigue, muscle and joint aches, and swollen lymph nodes; and
- Erythema migraines (EM) rashes--rashes that are located at the bite site and often are a red circle or oval shaped rash that can resemble a bull's eye.

Later signs and symptoms (days to months after tick bite):

- Severe headaches and neck stiffness;
- Additional EM rashes on other areas of the body;
- Arthritis with severe joint pain and swelling, particularly the knees and other large joints;
- Facial or Bell's palsy (loss of muscle tone or droop on one or both sides of the face);
- Intermittent pain in tendons, muscles, joints, and bones;
- Heart palpitations or an irregular heart beat (Lyme carditis);
- Episodes of dizziness or shortness of breath;
- Inflammation of the brain and spinal cord;
- Shooting pains, numbness, or tingling in the hands or feet; and
- Problems with short-term memory.

Tick bite prevention:

- Avoid areas where there is a lot of vegetation or animals that can carry ticks.
- If you have to be in these areas, wear clothes and gloves that cover as much skin as possible.
- Use bug repellent that protects against ticks.
- Check for ticks periodically on your clothes and skin, and in your hair. Do a head to toe check of your body before showering.
- Be aware that ticks like to bury themselves in the skin on warmer areas of the body.

If you find a tick on you:

- It is important to remove the tick as quickly as possible.
- Removing the tick quickly can prevent the spread of disease if the tick is infected.
- Use fine tip tweezers to remove the tick.
- Make sure the head of the tick is removed with the body. Save the tick in a zip lock bag or container in case disease occurs and it needs to be identified later on.
- Wash the area as well as your hands with soap and water after the tick is removed. Apply antibiotic ointment to the area if the bite becomes irritated.

Summary:

While many ticks do not carry disease, some do. Avoiding the areas where ticks are present is the best way to eliminate the chance of getting bitten. It is important to protect yourself and prevent tick bites.

DON'T BE HASTY...WHEN IT COMES TO SAFETY!
