

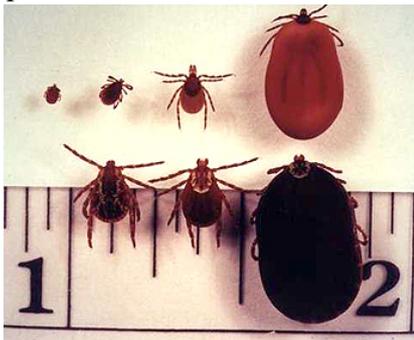
Tick Bite 101 - What to do when you find a tick...

Finding a tick attached on yourself or a loved one often leads to the question of... What do I do?

A decision as to what to do after a tick bite is individualized to each patient. Society guidelines vary dramatically and can be confusing.

The Infectious Disease Society of America's (IDSA) guidelines are generally accepted as the standard of care for most medical societies and are what most physicians follow. Their guidelines were established in 2006 and an update is expected in the spring of 2018.

The International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society (ILADS) guidelines were published in 2014. They conflict with the IDSA guidelines which has resulted in significant controversy and confusion among patients.



Top Row - deer tick
(nymph, adult male, adult female, engorged)
Bottom Row - dog tick

IDSA Guidelines:

A single dose of 200mg of Doxycycline is indicated if:

- the attached tick can be reliably identified as an Ixodes scapularis (deer) tick that has been estimated to have been attached for 36 hours or longer.
- the antibiotics can be started within 72 hours of the time the tick was removed.
- local rate of infection of ticks with *B. burgdoferi* is more than twenty percent.

Conflicting guidelines prompt patients and clinicians to make the best decision based on the patient's individualized situation.

If you find a tick attached, removed it immediately and try to identify if it's a deer tick. Determine how long it's been attached and if it's engorged. A tick that has been attached longer or is engorged is more likely to warrant antibiotics than a tick that was recently attached. If the tick was not attached for a significant period of time it may be sufficient to simply observe for development of a

ILADS Guidelines:

- Antibiotic prophylaxis should be offered for known Ixodes tick bites in which there is evidence of tick feeding, regardless of the degree of tick engorgement or the infection rate in the local tick population.
- The preferred regimen is 100 mg to 200 mg of doxycycline, twice daily for 20 days. Other treatment options may be appropriate on an individualized basis (Recommendation, very low-quality evidence).

rash or other symptoms before proceeding with antibiotic treatment.

Some patients elect to send a tick to be tested for lyme. If the tick is negative it brings tremendous relief, if it is positive - closer observation may be warranted and there is a lower threshold for initiation of antibiotics.

Ultimately, the decision of how to treat a tick bite must be individualized based on the risk of developing lyme disease vs the risk of antibiotic associated complications. Consulting with your doctor is always a good idea to decide what the best route is for you!

We Want Your Opinion!

The integrative health talks no longer seem to be attracting many patients and Dr. Seed is looking for a different educational component of the integrative care program. Is there something that you might find helpful, useful? Please let us know!

The University of Rhode Island TickEncounter Resource Center

An excellent site for more information about ticks and lyme disease prevention

Reminder...

Thank you to all of you who use the online scheduler. Please remember, if you don't see an appointment slot available and have an acute need, send a message or give a call, we usually can find a spot to squeeze you in!

Office Closures:

July 10-14th
Dr. Seed at camp!

August 7-11th
Dr. Seed sailing with family

As always, Dr. Seed will be available via cell phone or satellite phone and Jordyn will be in the office.

If office is closed and patients need an urgent visit they can be seen at:

Primary Health, Ellsworth
667-2288

Community Health Center,
Southwest Harbor
244-5630

Southwest Harbor Medical
Center
244-5513

Trenton Medical Center
667-5899

And, weekend care is always available at...

Ellsworth Family Medicine
Saturday and Sunday; 8-3
664-7770

Tick Prevention 101

The best way to prevent lyme disease is to avoid a tick bite. Here are some simple measures to take to keep you and your family tick-free.

Wear Protective clothing when venturing into a high risk tick area. Tuck pants into your socks. Wear lighter colors as this makes it easier to identify ticks.

Treat Clothing with Permethrin. Treat clothing and gear, such as boots, pants, socks and tents with products containing 0.5% permethrin. It remains protective through several washings. Pre-treated clothing is available and may be protective longer.

Bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors to wash off ticks that are crawling on you.

Conduct a full-body tick check using a mirror to view all parts of your body. Parents should check their children for ticks under the arms, in and around the ears, inside the belly button, behind the knees, between the legs, around the waist, and especially in their hair.

Examine gear and pets. Ticks can ride into the home on clothing and pets, then attach to a person later, so carefully examine pets, coats, and day packs.



Tumble dry clothes in a dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks on dry clothing after you come indoors. If the clothes are damp, additional time may be needed to ensure clothes are completely dry.

Permethrin

An insecticide produced by the chrysanthemum flower is extremely effective in preventing tick bites. One study found that people wearing permethrin treated sneakers and socks were 73.6 times less likely to have a tick bite. Dr. Seed feels more comfortable treating her

family's clothing with 0.5% Permethrin rather than applying other agents to skin. Please refer to attached Permethrin Fact Sheet.



Tick Removal

If a tick does become attached you will want to remove it as quickly as possible.



Use fine-tipped tweezers or a tick removal tool to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible. Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk the tick; this can cause the mouth-parts to break off and remain in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth-parts with tweezers. If you are unable to remove the mouth easily with clean tweezers, leave it alone and let the skin heal.