



## Preventing Tick Bites



### Overview

Before you spend time outdoors, you should be aware of the danger of tick bites. Ticks can carry harmful viruses and bacteria. A tick bite can transmit Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever and other serious illnesses to you. Here's how you can stay safe.

### Before you go out

Before venturing out, apply insect repellent spray. Make sure you spray your feet and ankles, and also your socks and shoes. Use a spray that contains DEET, permethrin or picaridin. Wear long-sleeved pants and a long-sleeved shirt, and tuck your pant legs into your socks. Choose light-colored clothing, because that will help you see ticks. Consider wearing clothes that have been treated to repel ticks. You can buy clothes that have been pre-treated. You can also have your own clothes professionally treated.

### When you get home

As soon as you get back home, carefully check all over your skin for ticks. Use a fine-tooth comb to check your hair. Take a shower, and wash and dry your clothes with high heat. This will help kill any ticks you brought home. And if you have pets, make sure you check them for ticks, too.

### Keep ticks away from your home

And finally, keep ticks away from your home. Clear bushes, tall grasses and leaves. Keep your grass mowed. Use wood chips or gravel to separate your patio or play equipment from brushy areas. Remove plants that attract deer, because deer can carry ticks into your yard. With a little effort and preparation, you can reduce your risk for tick bites.