

Tick-borne Diseases

What are tick-borne diseases?

Tick-borne diseases are a group of illnesses that people get from tick bites. They occur in all areas of the United States and affect people of all ages. These diseases are more common in the spring and summer months when tick bites are most common. Some of the tick-borne diseases in the United States are [Lyme disease](#), [ehrlichiosis](#) (say: "er-lick-ee-o-sis"), Rocky Mountain spotted fever and tularemia (say: "too-la-ree-me-a").

Who gets tick-borne diseases?

People who spend time in areas where tick bites are common (either for work or recreation) are at higher risk of getting tick-borne diseases. Ticks usually wait near the top of grassy plants and low bushes for people or animals to brush up against their perch. Ticks will often crawl upward on people's clothes or bodies for up to several hours or more before attaching to the skin.

How would I know if I have a tick-borne disease?

You may first feel as if you have flu symptoms, such as a fever, chills and body aches. You may also have a rash. You may not remember being bitten by a tick.

How are tick-borne diseases treated?

Most tick-borne diseases can be treated with antibiotics. You will get better more quickly if you see a doctor and begin treatment right away.

How can I prevent tick-borne diseases?

The best way to prevent tick-borne diseases is to avoid being bitten by ticks. When you are outdoors, follow these guidelines:

- Use tick repellents according to their instructions to help prevent bites. Tick repellents that contain DEET can be put directly on your skin or on your clothing before going into tick-infested areas. Repellents containing permethrin should be put only on clothing.
- 1. Wear shirts with long sleeves and wear long pants to prevent ticks from getting into the skin. Tuck pant legs into socks to help you see ticks before they get on your skin and bite. Check your entire body for ticks after you have been in tick-infested areas. Common tick bite locations include the back of the knees, groin area, underarms, ears, scalp and the back of the neck.
- 1. Remove any attached ticks as soon as possible. To remove an attached tick, use fine tweezers to grab the tick firmly by the head or as close to the head as possible and pull. Do not use heat (such as a lit match), petroleum jelly or other methods to try to make the tick "back out" on its own. These are not effective ways to remove a tick.
- 1. Wash the area where the tick was attached thoroughly with soap and water. Keep an eye on the area for a few weeks and not any changes. You should call your doctor if you develop a rash around the area where the tick was attached.

More Information

Common Infections

1. [Lyme Disease](#)
2. [Ehrlichiosis](#)
3. [Tick-borne Relapsing Fever](#)
4. [Babesiosis](#)