



## Tick Prevention and Avoidance

Tick exposure can occur year-round, but ticks are most active during warmer months (April- September). Lyme disease is caused by bacteria and is spread through the bite of infected blacklegged ticks (also known as deer ticks). The presence of the blacklegged tick in Michigan is growing. In fact, based on 2021 data, 77 of Michigan's 83 counties have a known risk for Lyme disease, or potential risk for Lyme disease. Macomb County is considered to have a known risk for Lyme disease due to historical surveillance data that shows the presence of blacklegged ticks that have tested positive with Lyme bacteria.

### **BEFORE YOU GO OUTDOORS**

**Know where to expect ticks.** Ticks live in grassy, brushy or wooded areas, or even on animals. Spending time outside walking your dog, camping, gardening, or hunting could bring you in close contact with ticks. Many people get ticks in their own yard or neighborhood.

**Treat clothing & gear** with products containing 0.5% permethrin. Permethrin can be used to treat boots, clothing, camping gear and remain protective through several washings.

Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - registered insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (OLE), paramenthane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone. Always follow product instructions. Do not use products containing OLE or PMD on children under 3 years old.

Avoid wooded and brushy areas with high grass and leaf litter. Walk in the center of trails.

Ticks can ride into your home on clothing & pets, then attach to a person later, so carefully examine pets, coats, and daypacks.

Conduct a full body check upon return from potentially tick-infested areas, including your own backyard. Use a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body.

Ticks can attach to any part of the human body but are often found in hard-to-see areas such as the groin, armpits, and scalp. In most cases, the tick must be attached for 26-48 hours or more before Lyme disease can be transmitted.

### **SYMPTOMS OF TICKBORNE ILLNESS**

The most common symptoms of tick-related illnesses include:

**Fever/Chills.** All tick borne diseases can cause fever.

**ACHES & PAINS.** Tickborne diseases can cause headaches, fatigue, & muscle aches. People with Lyme disease may also have joint pain.

**Rash.** Lyme disease, Southern tick associated rash illness (STARI), Rocky Mountain spotted fever (RMSF), ehrlichiosis, and tularemia can cause distinctive rashes.

\*\*\*\*For more information from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services on tick and Lyme disease visit <http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/safety-injury-prev/environmental-health/topics/mitracking/ticks>.

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