

Be TICK Smart! Protect, Check, Remove, Watch

by [BWC Social Media Team](#)

Prevent tick bites and the diseases they carry



As the weather warms and we're spending more time outdoors, the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) urges us to take precautions in preventing tick bites and the diseases they may carry.

This is particularly important if you work outside. You need to take added precautions to prevent tick bites such as wearing protective and light-colored clothing as well as using EPA-registered repellents. Here's what the ODH has to say about this vital health issue:

"Diseases spread by ticks are an increasing concern in Ohio," said ODH Director Amy Acton, M.D., MPH. "The best way to prevent tick-borne diseases is to prevent tick bites by taking simple precautions at home and when working or playing in wooded or brushy areas from early spring to late fall."

Tick-bite symptoms

Dr. Acton also recommends people who get sick from a tick bite contact their health care provider. This is particularly true if you have symptoms like:

- A fever or headache.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Joint pain or muscle aches.
- Fatigue.
- A rash.

Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever

Ticks are most active during the warm months, and most diseases in Ohio happen between the spring and late fall. However, blacklegged ticks that can transmit Lyme disease are active when it's colder. You can encounter them any time the temperature is above freezing.

The most common Ohio tick-borne diseases include [Lyme disease](#) and [Rocky Mountain spotted fever](#). There were 293 Lyme disease cases and 38 Rocky Mountain spotted fever cases reported in the state last year.

Tips to keep ticks away

- Walk in the middle of trails. Avoid tall grass, brush and leaf litter.
- Use EPA-registered repellents labeled for use against ticks on the skin. Follow the label's instructions. These repellents are safe and effective, even for pregnant and breastfeeding women.
- Treat clothing and your gear such as pants, boots, socks and tents with a product containing permethrin, or buy permethrin-treated clothing and gear. Do not apply permethrin directly on your skin.
- Wear long pants, sleeves and socks. Tuck your pant legs into your socks and your shirt into your pants.
- Wear light colors to make it easier to see ticks.

Remove ticks from everyone's skin

ODH says it's important to check yourself, your children and pets thoroughly after spending time in areas that may have ticks.

- If you find a tick, use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible. Pull it away from your skin with a steady, even pressure. Do not twist or jerk the tick, which can cause the mouth-parts to break off and remain in your skin. If this happens, remove the mouth-parts with tweezers. If you're unable to remove the mouth-parts easily with clean tweezers, leave it alone and let the skin heal.
- Safely dispose of the tick by putting it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed bag/container, wrapping it tightly in tape or flushing it down the toilet. Never crush a tick with your fingers.
- Then, wash your hands and the bite area with soap and water.
- Don't use petroleum jelly, a hot match, nail polish or any other "folk" remedies to remove a tick as these methods don't work.

Here's a [video](#) from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources that shows you how to remove a tick. For more information and resources, visit the [ODH website](#).