



# LYME DISEASE TICKS me off!

Ticks can be found all across Canada and are increasingly becoming infected with the bacteria *Borrelia burgdorferi*, also known as Lyme disease. It is important that as Scouts, Scouters and parents we are aware of how to prevent a tick bite from happening and what to do if a bite occurs.



**CAN YOU FIND THE FIVE TICKS HIDDEN IN THIS INFOGRAPHIC?**

Ticks are small and hard to find. Some ticks can even be the size of a poppy seed! Five ticks are hidden throughout this infographic. Can you find all five?

## What are ticks?

Ticks are tiny arachnids (bugs, like spiders) that live off the blood of mammals, birds, and sometimes reptiles and amphibians.

## Where are ticks found?

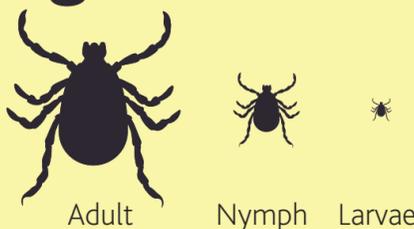
- Grassy, wooded areas or along shorelines and in parks
- They can also be found in urban areas, like your backyard or local greenspace



**NOT SO FUN FACT: BY 2020 80% OF THE POPULATION OF EASTERN CANADA (INCLUDING MANITOBA) WILL BE LIVING IN A REGION SUPPORTING ESTABLISHED POPULATIONS OF TICKS**

(Lyme Disease in Canada: an update on the Epidemiology; Simon Habegger; 2014)

## How big are ticks?



## Why are they so dangerous?

- Ticks are known for spreading Lyme disease and other vector borne illnesses
- To feed, ticks bury their heads into the skin of a host's body to drink blood

## How can I prevent a tick bite and Lyme disease?

- Wear long sleeves and pants
- Pull your socks over your pants so that they can't crawl in!
- Use bug spray that has DEET
- Stick to the trail and cleared areas
- Wear light clothing so they are easier to spot on your body
- When you take a break, check your clothes and entire body for ticks. Make sure to check all over your head, neck and behind the ears
- Do an extra-thorough check at the end of the day
- Purchase an effective tick remover
- If you have a pet, check them for ticks before they come into the house after being outside

**Myth:** Lyme-infected ticks only live in rural parts of Canada.

**Truth:** Lyme disease is present in most of Canada. Although Lyme infection is more common in rural areas, residents that live in urban areas are also at risk for infection. It is the migratory birds, robins and song sparrows etc. that bring this disease in each season. ([Canlyme.com](http://Canlyme.com))

## What should I do if I find a tick?

If you find a tick, properly remove it as soon as possible. Ticks can stay attached to skin for five or more days. Removing a tick within a few hours can help prevent Lyme disease, but not always. **It is recommended that if you are bit by a tick that you seek assistance from a healthcare professional.**

### Tick Removal

- Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick close to the skin surface
- Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Try not to twist or jerk!
- Clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub, or soap and water.

## Lyme disease Symptoms

If you're experiencing a combination of these symptoms, see your doctor immediately.

**Did you know:** Symptoms might not appear for weeks or even months after being bitten!

- Rash
- Fever
- Headache
- Numbness in face or limbs
- Nausea
- Jaw pain
- Burning sensations
- Light sensitivity
- Red eyes
- Muscle aches
- Neck stiffness
- Difficulty breathing or getting air
- Anxiety
- Muscle twitching
- Bone or joint pain
- Swollen lymph nodes

## Lyme disease Treatment

Early detection of Lyme disease is very important. If you have been exposed to a tick bite and have symptoms, seek medical attention right away. Early stage Lyme disease can be easily treated with antibiotics. The later you treat Lyme disease, the harder it is to get rid of.

## As a Scout, how can I help?

If you have a tick that you've had to remove, hold on to it. Put the tick in a clean container, and contact your local public health unit. As Lyme disease spreads to more ticks, it is increasingly important that ticks be identified and tested. Do your part to help!



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