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The Ticks Are Out. Here's How to Be Tick Smart

Protect, Check, Remove, Watch

May is Tickborne Disease Awareness Month

BURLINGTON – Tick season has arrived, but the Health Department says Vermonters can enjoy being outside in our beautiful state by knowing how to avoid ticks and their bite.

Visitors to the healthvermont.gov/BeTickSmart website will find information and resources about how to avoid ticks and what to do if you find one. The department has also updated its crowd-sourced [Tick Tracker](#), where people can share information about ticks they find around the state.

Reports of tickborne diseases in Vermont are up, in part, because of the greater awareness of symptoms and illness by the public and health care providers. In 2015, Vermont had the highest incidence of Lyme disease in the country. The number of reported cases of anaplasmosis quadrupled since 2012, and last year saw the first Vermont cases of a newly recognized tickborne disease caused by *Borrelia miyamotoi*. Health officials have also been on the watch for Powassan virus, which has been reported in surrounding states.

“Vermonters can get ill with a tickborne diseases at any time of year, but ticks are very active right now, so most people get sick in June and July,” said Bradley Tompkins, infectious disease epidemiologist at the Health Department. “Absolutely, we all should be out enjoying what Vermont has to offer – whether a walk in the woods, gardening or outdoor sports,” said Tompkins. “Just make it a priority before you go out the door to know the basic precautions for preventing tick bites.”

Health Department offers these tips to Be Tick Smart:

Protect

- Use an EPA-registered [tick repellent](#) on skin
- Apply permethrin to clothing
- Wear light-colored pants and long sleeves

Check

- Perform daily tick checks on yourself, children and pets
- Shower soon after spending time outdoors

Remove

- Use tweezers to grab the tick up close to skin
- Pull the tick straight up, do not twist
- Wash hands and bite area with soap and water
- Put clothing into the dryer for 10 minutes on high heat

Watch

- Symptoms may include fever, headache, joint pain, muscle aches, fatigue or a rash soon after a tick bite. Not all people with Lyme disease report a rash
- Symptoms may begin as soon as three days after a tick bite, but can appear as long as 30 days after a bite
- Contact your health care provider if you develop any of these symptoms

Go to healthvermont.gov/BeTickSmart for facts about tickborne diseases in Vermont, to see a video to learn how to safely remove a tick, and to order educational and awareness materials like booklets, cards and stickers.

The Health Department's Tick Tracker allows people to go online and report where they encounter ticks. This crowd sourced tool provides a way to collect and share anecdotal information about where, and what kind of ticks people find. Launch the Tick Tracker at healthvermont.gov/tracking/tick-tracker.

For health news, alerts and information, visit healthvermont.gov

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