

Five Simple Steps for Removing a Tick from Your Skin

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If you're spending time outdoors as a way to get some fresh air while social distancing, or if you have a pet who needs to go outside, it is important to know that ticks are most active in the summer months. While there are actions you can take to prevent ticks, such as avoiding grassy and wooded areas, using insect repellents, and treating your clothing with products containing permethrin, you should always do a body scan and check for ticks after spending time outdoors.



- 1.** Grab a pair of fine-tipped sterilized tweezers.
- 2.** Using the tweezers, grab and pinch the tick's head vs its swollen abdomen (do not grab at swollen abdomen of tick).
- 3.** Pull straight out; do not twist. Nail polish, petroleum jelly or heat will not help you remove the tick. If the tick breaks in half, remove the mouth-parts with clean tweezers. If you are unable to remove the mouth-parts easily, leave them alone and the skin will heal.
- 4.** Wash the site where the tick was on your skin with rubbing alcohol or soap and water.
- 5.** Never crush a tick. To dispose, put the tick in alcohol or in a sealed bag or container. You may want to save the tick for further reference, if needed.

After removal, keep an eye on the bite region over the next month, and watch out for the following potential symptoms of tick-borne diseases:

Symptoms of Lyme Disease

- An expanding bullseye ring developing where the tick was removed
- Fever
- Chills
- Headache
- Excessive fatigue
- Muscle and joint aches
- Swollen lymph nodes

Symptoms of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever

- Fever
- Nausea or vomiting
- Stomach or muscle pain
- Loss of appetite
- Headache

Fever plus one or more of these symptoms post-tick bite coupled with a rash with blotches and pinpoint dots occurring 2-4 days after fever may indicate Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. The rash typically starts on the wrists, palms and ankles and spreads elsewhere. Please note that Arkansas, Missouri, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia account for over 50% of Spotted Fever Rickettsiosis cases.



If the any of the above symptoms occur, see your primary care provider or schedule an appointment either in-person at a MinuteClinic location inside select CVS Pharmacy and Target stores or request an E-Clinic visit. MinuteClinic E-Clinic visits are a new telehealth option covered by most insurance plans allowing patients to connect virtually with MinuteClinic practitioners. Practitioners can assess your symptoms and prescribe treatment remotely. Visit MinuteClinic.com for more information.

Tick removal and recommendations follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines.