

Helping You Achieve Health . . . Naturally!

Summer 2017

Tick Borne Illnesses in Ontario – Including Lyme:

What You Need to Know:

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Prevention (canlyme.com)

Preventing infection

AVOID

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid tick-infested areas whenever possible, particularly in spring and early summer when nymph ticks feed. Adult ticks are a bigger threat in fall. Ticks favour moist, shaded environments; especially leafy wooded areas and overgrown grassy habitats.

REPEL (note these are toxic)

Products that can be used to defend against ticks: Permethrin is considered a better tick repellent, but in Canada, it is not allowed to be sold. It can be ordered over the internet.

The Canadian Paediatric Society states: “**Icaridin** is considered to be the repellent of first choice by the Public Health Agency of Canada’s Canadian Advisory Committee on Tropical Medicine and Travel for travellers six months to 12 years of age. Products containing up to 20% icaridin are considered to be safe and efficacious.”

Icaridin is good for adults as well. In Canada, the Canadian Tire stores sell a Woods brand of Icaridin repellent.



Top 5 tick habitat precautions

1. Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts. Tuck your pants into your socks to prevent ticks from getting inside your pants.
2. Check your clothes for ticks often. Ticks will climb upwards until they find an area of exposed skin.
3. Wear light coloured clothing to make it easier to spot ticks.
4. Walk on pathways or trails when possible staying in the middle. Avoid low-lying brush or long grass.
5. Apply insect repellent to your skin and clothing, especially at the openings such as ankle, wrist and neck.

Tick ID (canlyme.com)

Canada is home to many species of ticks, but the Ixodes Tick – more often known

as the “black-legged” or “deer” tick – is the most common Lyme-carrier.

Ixodes ticks...

- Have hard-shelled brown and black bodies, but appear grey when engorged
 - Have 8 legs as adults and nymphs, larvae (baby ticks) have only 6
 - Are 1–5 mm long, but adults can grow up to 20 mm when feeding
- Although commonly found in wooded areas, ticks can be found pretty much anywhere because they are carried by the birds and other animals they feed on.

In Canada, we have approximately 40 species of tick, but fortunately for humans, only a few of them can transmit Lyme disease.

*For more information or to make an appointment please call:
 (613) 798-1000 or email: info@oihc.ca or visit our website at: www.oihc.ca*

Common ticks in Canada

Below is a quick guide to some of the most common ticks in Canada.

Deer Tick

The official common name for a tick often suggests that it parasitizes a specific animal host ('deer tick', 'dog tick', 'cattle tick', etc). However, with rare exceptions, most tick species willingly suck blood from almost any animal they encounter.

Western Black-Legged Tick

The Western black-legged tick (*Ixodes pacificus*) is the second most common *Borrelia*-carrying tick in Canada. As its Latin name suggests, this tick is found mainly on the Pacific coast.

Ixodes angustus (no common name)

Although this tick's ability to transmit Lyme disease has been debated, recent lab experiments have demonstrated that it can transmit *Borrelia burgdorferi* and *B. bissettii*. So if bitten by this tick, it's still very important to be treated immediately.

Other common ticks

The Lone Star Tick

Although the Lone Star Tick (*Amblyomma americanum*) has been shown to transmit Lyme borreliosis (*Borrelia americana* and *Borrelia andersonii*), it can transmit other infections such as Ehrlichia and Tularemia. In addition, victims bitten by the Lone Star Tick will occasionally develop a circular rash, similar to the rash of early Lyme disease. The rash may be accompanied by flu-like symptoms, and this condition has been named "Southern Tick-Associated Rash Illness" (STARI). STARI is treated with oral antibiotics. Newer research is now associating a Lone Star Tick bite to a mammalian meat allergy.

American Dog Tick

The American Dog Tick (*Dermacentor variabilis*) is also a common tick in Canada, and can be found from Saskatchewan east to the Atlantic Provinces. This tick can transmit Rocky Mountain Spotted fever and Tularemia, but is not normally associated with Lyme disease.

Brown Dog Tick

The brown dog tick (*Rhipicephalus sanguineus*) has been shown to carry *Borrelia*, but their ability to transmit the bacterium to humans is still in question. The brown dog tick can transmit Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever.

Rocky Mountain Wood Tick

The Rocky Mountain wood tick (*Dermacentor andersoni*) is known to transmit Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Tularemia, Colorado Tick Fever, and is a major cause of tick paralysis.

Transmission

Lyme disease is known as a "tick-borne illness". This means that Lyme-infected ticks spread the disease to people by biting them. While tick transmission is most common, new studies indicate that there may be other ways to contract Lyme.

Other potential transmission methods:

- Contaminated blood transfusions
- Mosquito bites
- In utero (during pregnancy) or while breastfeeding
- Fluid exchange during intercourse
- Exposure to feces from animals/people infected with Lym

Tick Removal (lymeontario.com)

Various "home remedies" for tick removal have not been proven effective and may actually increase chances of infection by causing the tick to regurgitate.

Under no circumstance should a flame, ointment, flammable liquid (gasoline, oil, lighter fluid, acetone, nail polish, etc.) or caustic material be used in removal attempts.

A person who is bitten by a tick should go to a physician, and have it carefully removed with fine-pointed tweezers. Most tweezers are too blunt on the tips, and will cause an attached tick to regurgitate body fluids.

Place fine-pointed tweezers snugly against skin, with a firm grip of the tick's

head, gently pull the tick straight out with steady pressure. Do not twist or squeeze the tick. It is important to ensure removal of the tick's mouthpiece from the skin to reduce the chance of infection. Apply an antiseptic & wash your hands.

Make Note of: date, location on the body, outdoor activity; take a picture, especially if rash is present or appears. Place the tick in a vial with a piece of moist Kleenex or paper towel.

The Doctor can send the tick to be identified and tested for *Borrelia burgdorferi* and other tick-borne pathogens; alternatively you can bring it into the Public Health Dept. yourself to be sent off.

Mail it to: Central Laboratory, 81 Resources Rd., Etobicoke, ON M9P 3T1

In the Event of a Tick Bite:

1. Once a tick has been removed, wash the area well with warm soapy water, and apply a topical anti-microbial (tea tree oil, lemon essential oil, polysporin etc.)
2. If you have managed to save the tick – label a Ziploc bag with the date and area you likely picked up the tick and bring it to your family doctor for testing. Freeze it if you will not be seeing your family doctor immediately.
3. Take 1 dose of Ledum 200C immediately after any insect bite to reduce swelling and discomfort. Take subsequent doses daily for 5 days to support the immune system.
4. Apply Apis Gel OR Traumagen ointment on affected area to decrease discomfort.
5. Immune Support to initiate includes Vitamin A, Zinc, potentially Herbal medicines such as licorice root, Echinacea, astragalus.
6. See your Naturopathic Doctor to discuss Lyme prophylaxis further and to learn about the judicious use of oral antibiotics before a lyme test result is in.

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