

# Ticks and Lyme Disease

## Identification

The five common types of ticks found in Michigan:

[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/emergingdiseases/5commonticks\\_282020\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/emergingdiseases/5commonticks_282020_7.pdf)

## Risks of Ticks

The most common disease that ticks carry is [Lyme disease](#) and it can be transmitted to humans or animals by attaching themselves to skin. The Blacklegged tick is the most common tick to carry Lyme disease and is found in Michigan. A tick must be attached to the skin for atleast 36-48 hrs for it to be able to transmit the disease.

## Preventing Exposure to Ticks / Lyme Disease

- Wear light colored clothing so ticks can be spotted more easily, and removed before attachment
- Wearing long sleeved shirts and pants tucked into socks or boot tops can be helpful in keeping ticks from reaching your skin
- Ticks are usually located close to the ground, so boots or shoes and not sandals, are recommended
- Applying insect repellants such as DEET (n,n-diethyl-m toluamide) to clothes and exposed skin, and applying Permethrin (which kills ticks on contact) to clothes can reduce the risk of tick attachment
- DEET can be used safely on children and adults, but should be applied according to label guidelines.

[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/emergingdiseases/Tick\\_Lyme\\_Prevention\\_432371\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/emergingdiseases/Tick_Lyme_Prevention_432371_7.pdf)

## Tick Removal from Skin

If you find a tick attached to your skin, there's no need to panic. Several tick removal devices are available on the market, but a plain set of fine-tipped tweezers will remove a tick effectively.

<http://www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases/0,4579,7-186-25890-343197--,00.html>

## **Signs and Symptoms of Lyme Disease**

Lyme disease can cause serious complications to health. Medical attention should be immediately sought upon noticing any signs or symptoms, especially if traveled to an area known to have a presence of ticks or cases of Lyme disease reported. Early on and later symptoms can develop including rashes, facial palsy, and swollen and severe joint pain.

<http://www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases/0,4579,7-186-25890-343177--,00.html>

## **Testing**

State laboratories will test ticks free of charge to identify any diseases that the tick may be carrying. This helps to determine the proper medical treatment if the tick was attached to the skin long enough to transmit a disease.

[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/emergingdiseases/MDHHS\\_TSF\\_Web\\_549971\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/emergingdiseases/MDHHS_TSF_Web_549971_7.pdf)

## **Additional Resources/Information**

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Emerging Diseases:

About Lyme Disease: <http://www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases/0,4579,7-186-25890---,00.html>

Centers for Disease Control: Division of Vector-Borne Diseases

Ticks: <https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/>

Lyme and Other Tick-borne Diseases: <https://www.cdc.gov/media/dpk/diseases-and-conditions/lyme-disease/index.html>

*This document has been developed by the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department with information obtained from the MI Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control.*

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