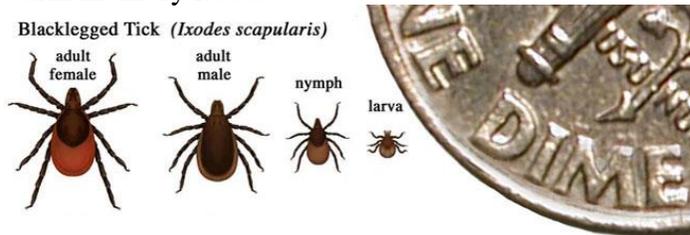


Lyme disease is a bacterial infection caused by the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi*. It is transmitted through the bite of infected black legged ticks, or deer ticks. The most common symptom of Lyme disease is an erythema migrans (EM) rash, sometimes referred to as the “bull’s-eye” rash. This can be accompanied by fever, malaise, fatigue, headache, muscle aches and joint pain. When Lyme disease is diagnosed and treated early, most people recover fully after a course of antibiotics. However, if left untreated, Lyme disease can have serious long term consequences, including chronic joint and muscle pain, Bell’s palsy, inflammation of the brain and spinal cord, and short term memory issues.



Anyone living near a wooded or brushy area, or who spends a great deal of time outdoors should take the proper precautions to prevent tick bites, including:

- Check clothes and any exposed skin frequently for ticks while outdoors and check again once indoors.
- Using insect repellent containing 20-30% DEET on exposed skin and clothing.
- Stay on cleared, well-traveled trails. Avoid contacting vegetation.
- Wear enclosed shoes, long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt.
- Tuck pant legs into socks or boots and shirt into pants.
- Wear light-colored clothing with a tight weave to spot ticks easily.
- Keep long hair tied back, especially when gardening.
- Avoid sitting directly on the ground or on stone walls.

The following steps can be taken to reduce the risk of ticks around your home:

- Clear tall grass and brush around homes and at the edge of lawns.
- Place a three feet-wide barrier of wood chips or gravel between lawns and wooded areas and around patios and play equipment. This will restrict tick migration into recreational areas.
- Mow the lawn frequently and keep leaves raked.
- Stack wood neatly and in a dry area.
- Keep playground equipment, decks, and patios away from yard edges and place them in a sunny location.
- Remove any old furniture, mattresses, or trash from the yard that may give ticks a place to hide.



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