



Tick-borne diseases

In the days to weeks following a tick bite, you should watch out for symptoms of tick-borne diseases to be on the safe side.

In [country], a tick-borne disease to be aware of is Lyme borreliosis which manifests itself with the following symptoms:

- Reddish skin rash in a ring shape around the bite
- Flu-like symptoms such as fever, tiredness, headache

Please contact your doctor if you experience any of these symptoms within 30 days after the bite. Most cases of Lyme borreliosis can be treated successfully with a few weeks of antibiotics. However, if left untreated, the disease can infect the heart, joints and nervous system.



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Tick-borne diseases in Europe

Tick-borne disease can be found almost all over Europe with some diseases being more prevalent in certain regions. Before travelling abroad, consult the websites of the national health authorities to check whether tick-borne diseases are a risk

in the region you are travelling to and ask your doctor regarding necessary precautionary measures, especially if you plan to engage in outdoors activities (camping, hiking, hunting, lake or river fishing, etc.) during your visit.

[Name and contact details of health authorities]



Lyme borreliosis

Protect yourself against >>



Ticks can pass on diseases



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Ixodes Ricinus

Ticks are very small and feed on the blood of mammals, reptiles and birds. As they feed, they can pick up bacteria or viruses naturally carried by these animals.

In Europe, the main tick-borne diseases to be aware of include: Tick-borne encephalitis, Lyme borreliosis, Tick-borne relapsing fever, Mediterranean Spotted Fever, Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever and Anaplasmosis.

Ticks can also bite humans who pass through the environments in which ticks live, so there is a risk that ticks may transfer infections into your bloodstream through a tick-bite. This can cause diseases.



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About ticks

Ticks live in the ground vegetation and move mainly by climbing up plants and walking on the ground. They latch on to a passing animal or human hosts by using hooks on their legs.

Ticks' life cycles go through four stages: egg, larva, nymph and adult. During the last three stages the tick feeds on blood and transmit disease.

To the naked eye the larvae look like specks of dust, while nymphs are slightly larger, pinhead or poppy seed size. Adult ticks have eight legs and are the size of small spiders. The adult ticks can also vary in colour, from reddish to dark brown or black. Once fed, a female tick can grow to the size of a pea, as its body fills with blood.



Adults: 7–15 mm

Nymphs: 2–3.5 mm

Larvae: 0.5–1 mm

Illustration is only indicative. Sizes can vary from 0.5 to 15 mm, depending on tick species.



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Risk areas

Ticks are second only to mosquitoes for carrying disease to humans. Due to various factors, there are now more ticks in many parts of [country] and Europe.

In [country], a tick-borne disease to be aware of is Lyme borreliosis which can occur in areas where infected ticks that transmit the disease are found. Ticks

thrive in shady and humid woodland, clearings with grass, open fields and bushes. They live in both rural and urban locations.

Information about which regions are at risk in [country] is available at: [Relevant website, e.g. www.tickmaps.ecdc.europa.eu]

Preventive measures

Tick-borne diseases can be prevented by avoiding tick bites: use insect repellents on your skin and clothes (clothes specific insect repellents should not be used on the skin) and protective clothing, such as long trousers and boots, when venturing into an area where ticks are likely to be present.

Early and correct removal of ticks is also important. There is a lower risk of infection if ticks are removed quickly, as infection generally does not occur during the first few hours of tick feeding.



How to detect and remove ticks

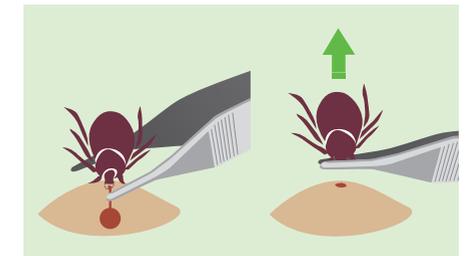
After having been outdoors in areas where ticks may live, check your clothes as well as your body for ticks, paying particular attention to the armpits, groin, legs, navel, neck and head. On children, ticks are often found on the head at the hairline. As ticks are very small, they can easily be overlooked. A magnifying glass may be helpful.



A tick bite usually looks like a small dark freckle with a scab on the skin which cannot be brushed away. Usually, it does not hurt. Still, the tick should be removed as soon as possible to minimise the risk of infection.

Use fine-tipped tweezers or tick removal tools to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible. Pull upward with steady, even pressure without jerking or twisting avoiding squeezing the tick's body or that mouth parts remains in the wound. Do not squeeze the tick's body, and do not apply heat or any substances

to the tick, as this may cause it to empty its stomach contents into the wound which would cause infections.



Still using the tweezers, wrap the tick in some toilet paper and flush it down the toilet.



Finally, wash your wound with warm water and soap and apply antiseptic, like alcohol or iodine, to the area.

A small part of the tick's mouth may remain in the wound. This is not dangerous and it will disappear after a couple of days along with the wound.

However, if the lesion does not start to resolve after a couple of days, you should see a medical professional as this may indicate an infection (rare).