



TICKS & TICK-BORNE ILLNESSES BEST PRACTICES

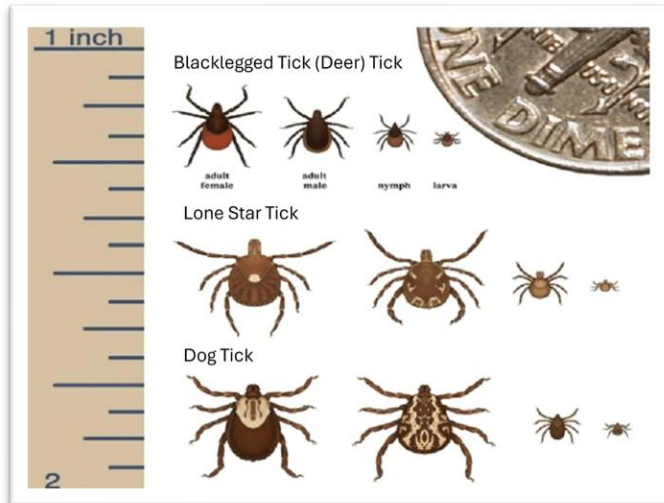
The three most common ticks in New Jersey are the dog tick, the deer tick, and the lone star tick. The three species can range in size from a poppy seed as a nymph to about ¼ inch as an adult. According to the N.J. Department of Health, ticks in the State can carry a variety of diseases.

Deer Ticks are black-legged ticks and can carry Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, babesiosis, and Powassan disease.

Dog Ticks can transmit Rocky Mountain spotted fever and tularemia.

Lone Star Ticks can transmit ehrlichiosis, tularemia, and STARI.

The white-footed mouse carries the bacteria that cause Lyme disease. Ticks acquire them by feeding on mouse blood and can then transmit the bacteria to other animals and humans. Like many Northeast states, New Jersey has a higher disease rate than the national rate.



Source: CDC Tick Manual

If Lyme disease is detected early, it can be treated successfully with antibiotics. Left untreated, it can lead to severe heart and nervous system problems. Other long-term effects include chronic headaches or stomach problems, memory loss, joint stiffness, and speech impairment.

Early symptoms of Lyme disease include:

- A bullseye-shaped rash at the site of the bite may appear around a week later.
- Severe headaches and neck stiffness.
- Joint and nerve pain.

While Lyme disease is the most prevalent tick-borne disease, there are several other tick-borne diseases present in New Jersey, according to the State Department of Health:

- Tularemia is a bacterial disease.
- Ehrlichiosis is a general term for several bacterial diseases.
- Powassan (POW) is a virus that can cause encephalitis or meningitis.
- Babesiosis is a parasite that infects red blood cells.
- Anaplasmosis is a bacterial disease that can be a severe illness if not treated properly.
- Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF) is a bacterial infection increasing in frequency in New Jersey.
- Southern Tick-Associated Rash Illness (STARI) – the cause of STARI remains unknown.

Employers Prevention Strategies

- Decrease tick populations around your facilities, such as public works buildings, lift stations, and recreational buildings, by removing leaf litter, mowing, or even removing grass and brush around buildings.
- Use an exterminating service to control rodents.
- Discourage deer and other animal activity in proximity of facilities (ex., do not feed wildlife).
- Encourage workers to wear long sleeves and long pants when assigned work in areas where ticks are likely to be present. Consider making lockers available for employees to store spare clothes. Don't forget summer employees.
- Consider making insecticide wipes available.
- Consider providing workers with pre-treated protective clothing containing Permethrin. Professionally pre-treated clothing may offer more effective, longer-lasting protection than over-the-counter products.
- Offer employee training and morning reminders when applicable.

Employees Prevention Strategies

- Educate yourself on tick behavior and identification. Avoid areas where ticks are more likely to be found. Whenever possible, work from mowed areas when performing tasks near wood lines. Use the middle of trails when in the woods.
- Wear light-colored clothing and long-sleeved shirts and long pants. This makes ticks easy to spot before they find a place to bite you. Tuck pant legs into shoes or socks and shirttails into pants.
 - For employees who may wear short pants, consider having a spare pair of long pants in your locker or vehicle.
 - Put clothes in the dryer on HIGH heat for 10 - 15 minutes when you get home to kill ticks; then launder. Ticks are susceptible to dryness. Washing, even in hot water, will not reliably kill them.
- Use insect repellent containing 20–50% DEET, picaridin, or IR3535 on exposed skin and outer clothing. Spray the inside surfaces of the pants' legs also. Be sure to reapply during the day as directed by the product's label.
- Consider treating clothing with Permethrin. Protection can remain effective through several washing cycles.
- Shower at the end of the day to wash off residual insecticide and unattached ticks and check yourself for attached ticks. Use a mirror if needed. It takes more than 24 hours for a tick to infect you with the above diseases.
- If you do find a tick, remove it properly:
 - Using fine-tipped tweezers, grasp the tick firmly as close to your skin as possible.
 - With a steady motion, pull the tick from your skin. Do not jerk; this may rip the tick in half.
 - Wash the area with soap and warm water.

DO NOT
use petroleum jelly, hot matches, nail polish remover,
or other products to remove a tick.

Employees should report tick bites to their employer and closely monitor their health. They should immediately consult their physician if they experience a rash, fever, headache, joint or muscle pains, or swollen lymph nodes within 30 days of a tick bite. Be sure to tell the doctor about your recent tick bite, when the bite occurred, and where you most likely acquired the tick.