

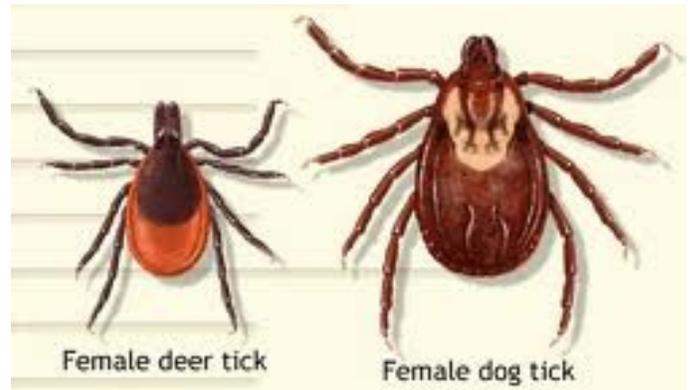
# What you need to know about Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is common in the United States and is spread by the deer tick. Protecting yourself and your family from tick bites and having Lyme disease diagnosed at an early stage are important steps to prevent serious illnesses.

The bite of a deer tick (called *Ixodes scapularis*) is the source of transmitting Lyme disease to humans and animals. When ticks bite humans, they can be attached for as long as 3 days. The chance of getting Lyme disease increases if the tick is attached for 24 hours or more. Though May through September are the most active times for ticks, whenever the temperature climbs above 45 degrees, even in winter, ticks become active.

Dog ticks do NOT transmit Lyme disease. They can, however, transmit Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, which is extremely rare in CT.

Below is a picture of the most common ticks found in our area.



Female deer tick

Female dog tick

## What to do if you find a tick on yourself or someone else

- Remove the tick with tweezers or forceps.
- Do NOT use tape, soap, oil, etc. to remove the tick if you are having the tick tested. These and other applications will cause a delay in the testing process.
- Clean the bite site with antiseptic, alcohol, etc.
- If submitting the tick for testing, place it in a small zip bag. If it's still alive, add a few blades of grass or other live greenery.
- Submit the tick to Ledge Light Health District by mail or in person.
- **There is a fee of \$20.00 for tick submission and processing.**
- You can access the Tick Submission Form on our website at: [www.llhd.org](http://www.llhd.org) under Healthy Communities, Nurturing Healthy Environments in the Tick Borne Diseases section.
- Your tick will be tested at the CT Agriculture Extension Station laboratory in New Haven, CT.
- Results can take up to 30 days. You will be contacted by mail with your results as soon as they are received by Ledge Light Health District.

## Be Aware of Lyme Disease Symptoms

If you are bitten by a tick, remove it promptly, and watch for flu-like symptoms. Symptoms may include: headache, stiff neck, fever, muscle aches and fatigue. Other symptoms include chills, abdominal pain, nausea, sensitivity to light and thirst. Late symptoms may include neurological disorders, arthritis, and heart abnormalities.

A blood test for Lyme disease will normally yield negative results if done within 30 days of the bite. Your physician will decide if a test may be best for you. After considering your other medical issues, your doctor may prescribe an antibiotic to treat Lyme disease.

## Rashes

Many tick bites yield a rash at the bite site - this is common. Some rashes appear as a "bull's-eye" pattern. A rash that increases to the size of a nickel or larger (erythema migrans), and multiple rashes should be checked by a physician. Below are examples of rashes from tick bites. On darker skinned persons, the rash may resemble brown/red/black bruising.



## For More Information and Resources:

Log onto the Centers for Disease Control at: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

Log onto the Connecticut Agriculture Extension Station website at: [www.ct.gov/caes](http://www.ct.gov/caes)  
(Click on the lower left to access the Tick Management Handbook)

For more information, please contact us at:

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