

SAFETY MEMO

May 8th, 2023 – Tick Awareness – Part 1

DID YOU KNOW?

Background

Ticks are tiny parasitic arachnids that feed on the blood of animals and can infect their host with bacteria or viruses. Only a few species are known to bite and transmit disease to humans. There are approximately 850¹ species of ticks worldwide, mostly found in hot, humid climates. North America has about 90 different species, five of which need to be monitored: the black-legged tick, the American dog tick, the brown dog tick and the lone star tick. Much of the United States, Canada and Quebec, as well as Europe and Asia are now affected by tick-related issues. In the case of Lyme disease in Quebec, ticks move into new territories by migratory birds or animals from affected regions, global warming impacts the migration of these species to the north. Knowing the type of ticks in your area is critical to your health and safety on outdoor adventures.



Figure 1 – Tick removal on a dog²

Prevention

Depending on climate, preventive measures against ticks should be applied all year but especially during warmer months of April to September. Some methods to reduce exposure and risks of exposure include:

- Avoiding wooded and bushy areas with high grass and leaf litter or lying in high grass
- Checking your entire body and your pets for ticks after coming indoors from hiking or walks in wooded areas. Ticks can be small and bite zones can often be hard to reach and inspect and can include³
 - groin
 - navel
 - armpits
 - inside or around the ears
 - back of the knees
 - bottom of the buttocks
 - lower back
 - hair
- Wearing clothing and gear treated with 0.5% permethrin, a tick-repelling solution.⁴ (Do not apply permethrin to skin.)
- Wearing clothing that minimizes skin exposure and to close entry spots using layers e.g. long-sleeved shirts, long socks, pants, hats, and tucking a shirt and socks into pants
- Using Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents containing 20%-30% DEET, picaridin, IR3535, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (OLE), para-menthane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone⁵. These products can be applied directly to skin. Always check the manufacturer's recommendations for minimum age and frequency of applications.

¹ PestWorld.org. (2023). Ticks by state. Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/bdheickp>

² Preventing tick-borne diseases. (mai 2023) <https://garystockbridge617.getarchive.net/amp/media/preventing-tick-borne-diseases-52756a>

³ Gouvernement du Québec, Maladie de Lyme, Consulté 1^{er} mai 2023, <https://www.quebec.ca/sante/problemes-de-sante/a-z/maladie-de-lyme>

⁴ PestWorld.org. (2023). Ticks by state. Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/bdheickp>

⁵ Tick Safety. Removing a Tick. 2014-2022, Retrieved from <https://ticksafety.com/removal-prevention/>

