

SAFETY MEMO

May 15th, 2023 – Tick Awareness – Part 2

DID YOU KNOW?

Removal

Do not apply compounds or burn the tick while it is attached. This can cause the tick to release saliva or contents from its stomach, further increasing the chances of illness. An effective method is to remove the tick using tweezers or forceps instead of waiting for it to detach.



Figure 1. Removing a tick using a tick remover¹

- First sanitize the bite area and instruments with rubbing alcohol
- Use tweezers to grasp the tick on the head and pull slowly and carefully away from the bite area. Do not use a twisting motion to remove the tick nor press on the abdomen of the tick. If you're using a tick remover, refer to the manufacturer instructions.
- Wash the bite area and your hands with soap and water or disinfect with alcohol-based hand sanitizer².

After removing the tick, it can be placed in an airtight container in the refrigerator. Label the container with the date and the bite area. In the event that you develop symptoms associated with tick-borne diseases, it may be useful to test the tick. The tick can also be sent to a laboratory for identification and analysis for epidemiological surveillance. The dangerous pathogens

are in the tick's digestive tract³. The longer a tick is attached, the higher the likelihood of an infectious pathogen dose is to be transmitted⁴.

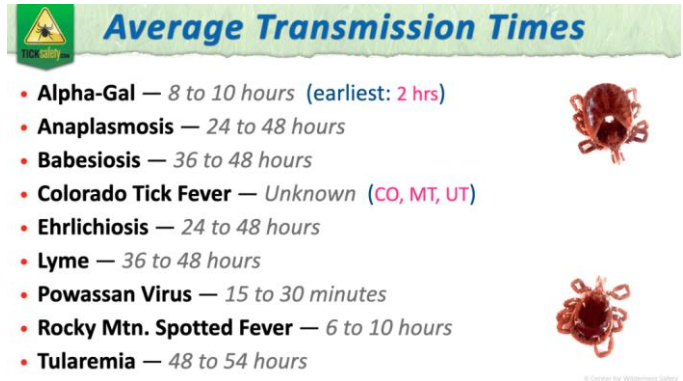


Figure 2. Tick Average Transmission Times⁵

The amount of time the tick is attached can be estimated by how engorged the tick is.

It is recommended to see a doctor if one is unable to remove the tick or if any signs or symptoms of a tick-borne illness occurs. Some common symptoms include:

- Flu-like symptoms, fever, chills, headache, fatigue, muscle and joint aches, and swollen lymph nodes⁶,
- Erythema migrans rash, a rash that looks like a bullseye,
- Joint pain and swelling,
- Facial palsy.

¹ Otom, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

² Tick Awareness Canada Association. Tick Removal. No Date. Retrieved from <https://www.tickawarenesscanada.com/tick-removal/>

³ Tick Repellent Guide. How to Get a Tick Head Out. May 15, 2022, Retrieved from <https://tickrepellent.net/how-to-get-a-tick-head-out/>

⁴ Tick Safety. Transmission Times. 2014-2022. Retrieved from <https://ticksafety.com/resources/disease-transmission-times/>

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Lyme Disease. January 19, 2022, Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/index.html>

