

Ticks and Lyme disease

Ticks are part of the arachnid's family (i.e. spiders) and they are external parasites. Ticks feed on the blood of animals including humans. They live in grassy or wooded areas. They do not fly, jump, or hop they simply stretch one of their eight legs and catch a ride on whatever animal or human comes their way. Most people who have been bitten by a tick don't notice until after the tick has fed and fallen off leaving sometimes a red mark, itchiness sometimes a bullseye rash. A person could also experience more serious reactions to the bite such as: fever, achiness, chills, headache, weakness, pain and swelling in joints or joint pain. Tick season is typically April to September.

Risk factors for tick bites include hiking in the woods/and or grassy areas with exposed skin to the environment, not using insect repellent or clothing that protects arms legs and other body areas. Consumers who have pets that go outdoors and are not protected by flea and tick repellents are also at higher risk.

There is no treatment for a tick bite except washing site and putting alcohol or Neosporin ointment. However if someone experiences some of the above symptoms should go see their doctor or ER and seek treatment with oral antibiotics and maybe get tested for Lyme disease. Lyme disease is caused by a bacteria transmitted to humans through the bite of infected blacklegged tick. If left untreated the infection can spread to joints, the heart, and the Central nervous system. Lyme disease can be treated with a few weeks of antibiotics. So remember use insect repellent, remove ticks promptly (using tweezers) apply pesticides around any areas that ticks are found, frequent skin checks on yourself and any pets. Prevention is key.

