



Preventing Tick Bites

While it is a good idea to take preventive measures against ticks year-round, the Hingham Health Department would like to remind you to be extra vigilant in warmer months (April-September) when ticks are most active.

Avoid Direct Contact with Ticks

- Walk in the center of trails and avoid wooded and bushy areas with high grass.
- Use an insect repellent containing DEET on exposed skin, and treat clothing and footwear with a permethrin-based repellent that provides weeks of protection and remains through several washings. Always follow directions on the label and take precautions with children.
- Tuck your pants into socks to reduce the amount of exposed skin. When hiking, stay on well-worn paths and out of tall grass or bushy areas.

Find and Remove Ticks from Your Body

- Bath or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors (preferably within two hours) to wash off and more easily find ticks that are crawling on you.
- Conduct a full-body tick check using a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body upon return from tick-infested areas. Parents should check their children for ticks under the arms, in and around the ears, inside the belly button, behind the knees, between the legs, around the waist, and especially in their hair.
- Examine gear and pets. Ticks can ride into the home on clothing and pets, then attach to a person later, so carefully examine pets, coats, and day packs.
- Tumble clothes in a dryer on high heat for an hour to kill remaining ticks. (Some research suggests that shorter drying times may also be effective, particularly if the clothing is not wet.)

Create a Tick-safe Zone to Reduce Ticks in the Yard

Here are some simple landscaping techniques that can help reduce tick populations:

- Remove leaf litter.
- Clear tall grasses and brush around homes and at the edge of lawns.
- Place a 3-ft wide barrier of wood chips or gravel between lawns and wooded areas to restrict tick migration into recreational areas.
- Mow the lawn frequently.
- Stack wood neatly and in a dry area (discourages rodents).
- Keep playground equipment, decks, and patios away from yard edges and trees.
- Discourage unwelcome animals (such as deer, raccoons, and stray dogs) from entering your yard by constructing fences.
- Remove old furniture, mattresses, or trash from the yard that may give ticks a place to hide.

For more information link to the [Hingham Health Department website](#) or call us @ 781-741-1466.