

Enjoy the Weather, but Watch Out for Ticks!

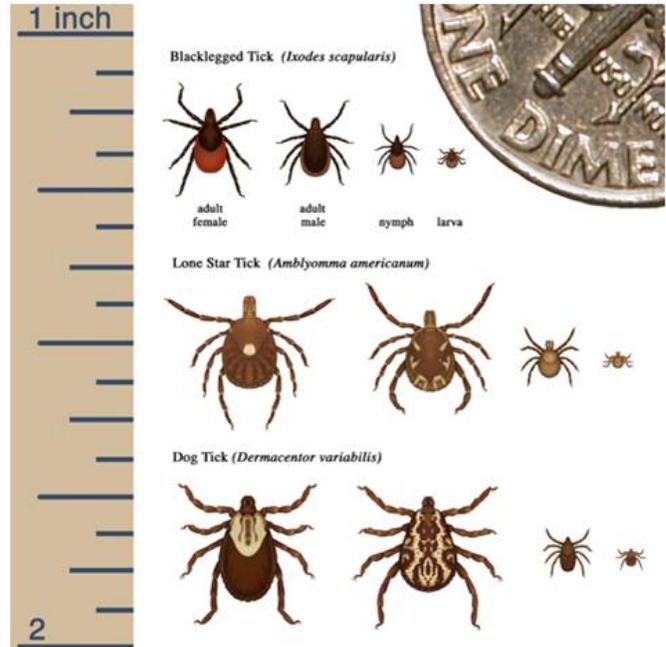
We hope everyone is doing well! It is nice to finally see some beautiful spring weather lately! That means it is time to head outside and get some fresh air. As great as springtime is after a long winter, this also means that the ticks and other biting insects are coming out. This article is to help you identify ticks, offer some ways to avoid them, and some general safety precautions for you, your family, and your pets.

The two most common ticks in our region are wood (dog) ticks and deer (blacklegged) ticks. There is also a new tick that has been found in Minnesota but is still rare, the lone star tick. Below is a picture of all three kinds so you can know what to look for when out and about enjoying the outdoors.

The small deer tick is of most concern as they can potentially transmit Lyme Disease. Wood ticks are very common and generally do not spread diseases. The lone star tick, though rare in Minnesota can spread several diseases including a strange trigger which could make you allergic to meat. The bottom line is to make sure you check yourself and your pets for ticks early and often. The sooner you can remove a tick the better!

One of the best defenses against allowing ticks to latch onto you while you enjoy the outdoors is a chemical called permethrin. Permethrin not only repels ticks, but it also is effective against other summer insects including mosquitoes. Simply get a bottle and spray on your clothing that you

intend to wear outside, or even your gear and tent if camping and let dry for two hours. It stays effective for up to 6 machine washes or 6 weeks before you need to reapply! For your four-legged friends it is recommended to find a tick medicine that you give them especially in the summer months.



If you do happen to be bit by a tick and the tick cannot be fully removed it is recommended that you see a health care provider. Also, if your tick bite develops a 'bullseye' rash which is a sign of possible Lyme disease it may be smart to see your health care provider for treatment. Our biggest advice is to be proactive about looking for ticks when out and about enjoying the outdoors. Enjoy this spring and summer and keep a lookout for ticks!

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