

# Tick Removal

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## Tick Removal Fact Sheet

Lyme Disease Association, Inc.

Lyme disease is caused by a spiral-shaped bacteria, *Borrelia burgdorferi* (Bb), or by newly discovered *Borrelia mayonii*. It is usually transmitted by the bite of an infected tick—*Ixodes scapularis* in the East, *Ixodes pacificus* in the West (commonly called blacklegged/deer ticks).

The longer a tick is attached, the greater risk of disease transmission. Improper removal greatly increases risk of infection. If you put any substance on a tick, put a hot match against it, or squeeze or twist the body, you can cause the tick to regurgitate diseases it has inside into you. The deer tick can transmit at least 9 diseases. Other ticks can transmit different diseases. Go to [www.LymeDiseaseAssociation.org](http://www.LymeDiseaseAssociation.org) for details.

Do a tick check every time you come out of a tick-friendly environment and at least daily. It is important to correctly remove a tick as soon as possible from humans and pets. Diseases can be transmitted in very short periods of time. After removal, check out the LDA's *LymeR Primer* for details on ticks and diseases they can transmit. <https://www.lymediseaseassociation.org/resources>. If you decide to test the tick, remember that it takes time for results to be returned to you, and you can have disease during that time.

### Tick Removal

- Do not burn or put any substance on tick!  
(This may force the tick to regurgitate, greatly increasing chance of disease(s) transmission.)
- Do not grasp, squeeze or twist body of tick. (Same reason as above.)
- Grasp tick close to skin with pointed tweezers.
- Pull tick straight out.
- Save for identification.
- Clean & use antiseptic on skin.
- Disinfect tweezers.
- Wash hands thoroughly or use disposable gloves if possible throughout.
- See a doctor after a tick bite & bring the tick.
- Improper tick removal increases chances of infection.
- The longer a tick is attached, the greater risk of disease.
- For tick disposal, place on tape & fold over, or follow directions below for saving tick if you decide to have it tested.



### Tick Testing for Tick-Borne Diseases

- Save tick alive if possible. Do NOT put in tape if sending for testing.
- Place in airtight container or zip lock bag.
- Put in with moist cotton ball (no alcohol).
- Send with check to tick-testing lab. There may be a fee.
- Tick testing labs include:
  - IGeneX Labs, Palo Alto, CA 800-832-3200
  - Clongen Laboratories, LLC, Gaithersburg, MD 877-256-6436
  - NJ Labs, New Brunswick, NJ 732- 249-0148Also check with your state/local health department, they may test for free.

*This material is presented to provide practical & useful information on the subject matter covered. It is being presented with the understanding that LDA is not engaged in rendering medical or other professional services. If medical or other expert assistance is required, the services of a licensed physician or veterinarian should be sought. If you chose to use preventive products on yourself or your pets, carefully read and follow your medical professional and manufactures' suggestions.*

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[www.LymeDiseaseAssociation.org](http://www.LymeDiseaseAssociation.org) PO Box 1438, Jackson, NJ 08527. Join mailing list: textLDAto22828  
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