



# Tick specimen collection

## Rationale and guidance for Colorado veterinarians

The Vector-Borne Diseases Program at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment does passive surveillance for ticks found on companion animals in Colorado. The intent of the surveillance is to extrapolate the geographic distribution of different tick species by collecting samples from domestic companion animals with known exposure areas. This surveillance is directly relevant to companion animal exposures to tick-borne disease agents, and is a valuable proxy for estimating human exposure risk to ticks in different areas of our state.

The state health department will accept any life stage (larva, nymph, or adult) of the tick, and the department's medical entomologist will identify the species of tick. We will use the information we gain to create public health messages about risk to humans of acquiring tick-borne diseases. Veterinarians can use the information to estimate disease risk to animals.

Tick distribution maps and information about tick-borne diseases are available at [www.colorado.gov/cdphe/tick-borne-diseases](http://www.colorado.gov/cdphe/tick-borne-diseases).

### To send us a specimen:

- Place tick samples in a rigid plastic container, such as a prescription pill bottle with cotton balls, or in alcohol in a leak-proof container.
- Send samples and a copy of the submission form (link) to  
CDPHE  
ATTN: MEDICAL ENTOMOLOGY - A3  
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South  
Denver, CO, 80246
- If you want to know the species of the tick samples you submit, put your email address on the submission form.