



TICKS

What You Should Know

FUN FACT: Did you know that ticks become active as soon as the snow melts and continue to be active well into late fall? Some species, like the Black-legged tick, will start looking for an animal to feed on when it's as cold as 4°C outside!

Ticks can be found in many areas throughout Canada. While most ticks won't cause serious health issues, certain species of ticks are carriers for specific diseases that are transmittable through a skin bite. The most common ticks we hear about today are:

- Black-legged tick/ Deer tick (*Ixodes scapularis*) can transmit Lyme disease
- American Dog tick (*Dermacentor variabilis*) can transmit Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever

Even though local Alberta ticks, such as the Moose tick and Rocky Mountain Wood tick, cannot carry the bacteria that cause Lyme disease, more human cases are being reported annually.

According to the Alberta Tick Surveillance, black-legged ticks are present but not currently reproducing in Alberta. Through volunteer tick submission, the Alberta government is able to monitor the species variation and their numbers in the province.

Lyme disease in both people and animals is caused by a bite from an infected Black-legged tick which is found in forests, wooded areas, shrubs and tall grass. The use of Permethrin and DEET repellents offer tick protection for people but are not to be used on animals. Tick prevention products are offered through our veterinary clinic for animal use.

SUBMIT-A-TICK PROGRAM

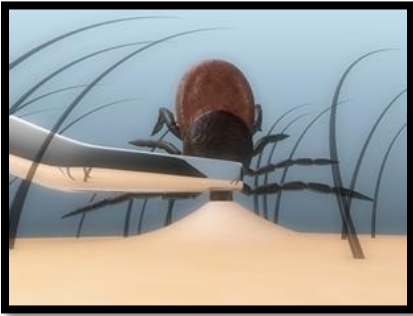
- This tick surveillance program is run by the Government of Alberta since 2007 and is free for you to submit ticks found on your animal through a veterinary clinic.
- The program monitors the type of ticks that attach to companion animals, livestock and humans, and also those found in the environment.
- Remove the tick safely from the animal, place the tick in a clean container or a Ziploc bag with no ventilation holes, and bring it to your local veterinary clinic.
- Ticks will be sent to a lab for species identification and to see if they carry the Lyme disease causing bacteria, *Borrelia burgdorferi*.
- Please visit Alberta Health's website for more information if a tick is found on a human or in the environment and how to submit the tick.



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CALL US TODAY OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
www.westlockvetcenter.com

REMOVING A TICK:



- If the tick was found on animal, bring it to a veterinary clinic to submit.
- If the tick was found on a human or in the environment, bring it to Alberta Health Services Environmental Health Office.

Use clean tweezers, grasp the head of the tick as close to the skin as possible and slowly pull straight out.

Do NOT jerk or twist or crush the tick. If mouth parts break off you can try and remove them with tweezers or leave them alone and let the skin heal.

Place the tick in a container or Ziploc bag if planning on submitting to the tick surveillance program. You can put a moist cotton ball in with the tick so it doesn't dry out.

Wash the bite area and your hands with soap or disinfect with alcohol hand sanitizer. Ticks removed within 24-36 hours of the tick bite usually prevent infection.

Check pets daily for ticks if coming in from the outdoors where ticks can be found.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT THESE REFERENCES:

Alberta Health

<http://www.health.alberta.ca/health-info/lyme-disease.html>

Alberta Association of Animal Health Technologists

<http://www.aaht.com/its-time-to-have-the-tick-talk-march-is-national-tick-awareness-month/>

Government of Canada

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/lyme-disease.html>

Canadian Veterinary Medical Association

https://www.canadianveterinarians.net/documents/lyme_disease_poster_for_pet_owners

Please consult with your veterinarian about the best product to use for your pet. Preventing tick bites is the best form of protection against tick borne diseases.

