

# Tickborne Disease Prevention

Ticks are most active during warm weather months, generally late spring through fall. If spending time outdoors in places where ticks live (brushy, wooded or grassy places) take the following steps to protect yourself from being bitten by a tick:

- Check yourself from head to toe for ticks each time you spend time in areas where ticks live. If a tick is found, remove it with tweezers. Tick bites are usually painless, so most people are unaware that they have an attached tick without a careful check.
- Check children or pets for ticks as well.
- If any ticks are found on clothing, remove them before entering your vehicle or going indoors.
- Use repellent with DEET or permethrin. Permethrin should only be used on clothing, shoes, bed nets, and camping gear, and should not be applied directly to the skin. DEET can be applied directly to the skin.
- Wear light-colored clothing, long pants, a long sleeved shirt, and tuck your pants into your socks or boots.
- Stay on cleared trails or paths when hiking or walking and stay more toward the center of the trail or path to avoid contact with brush, tall grass and other shrubbery. Ticks attach themselves to people as they pass by when rubbing up against shrubbery, leaves and tall grass.

# Tick Removal Steps

- Use a pair of fine-tipped tweezers.
- Grab the tick as close to the skin surface as possible.
- Pull the tick straight upward with steady even pressure.
- Do not squeeze, crush, or puncture the body of tick. This should remove the tick with mouth parts intact.
- After removing the tick, disinfect the area of the bite with rubbing alcohol.
- Note the site and date of the bite.
- Watch for signs & symptoms of tick-associated diseases for 30 days.
- You may want to save the tick for identification in case you become ill. Place the tick in a plastic bag and put it in your freezer.

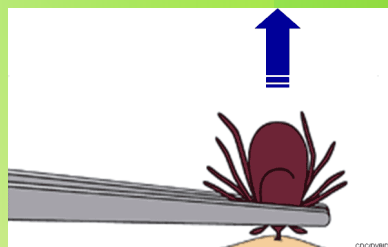
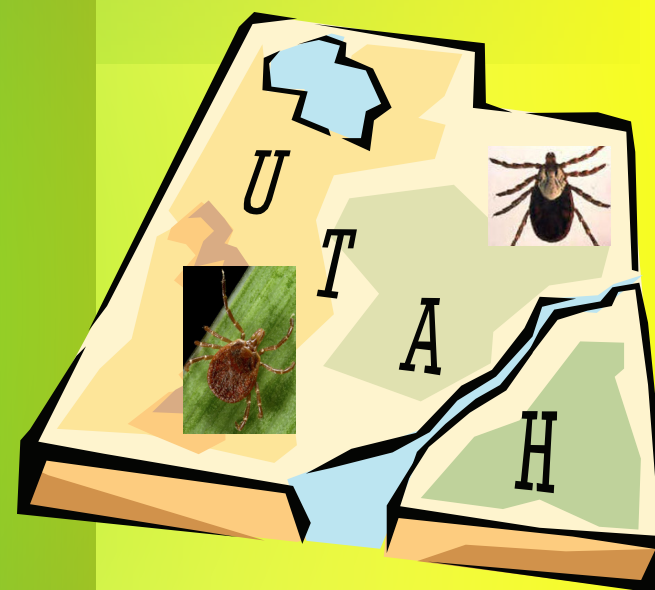


Photo credit: CDC/DVBID

# Facts about Tickborne Disease



in Utah



For more information on tickborne diseases

visit: [www.health.utah.gov/epi](http://www.health.utah.gov/epi)

or

call: 801-538-6191



[www.ishaol.com](http://www.ishaol.com)



# Different Tickborne Diseases Reported in Utah

## Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF)

RMSF is caused by bacteria. It is spread by infected ticks to humans and animals.

RMSF occurs all throughout the U.S., but is most common in the eastern and central states.

RMSF causes high fever, severe headache, body aches, nausea, and chills. 50% of cases will develop a raised red rash on the arms and legs (particularly the hands and feet). The rash then spreads to the trunk of the body. RMSF can be fatal if not treated promptly. Symptoms appear 3-14 days after the tick bite.

RMSF is best treated with antibiotics. Treatment usually lasts from 5-10 days.

## Colorado Tick Fever (CTF)

CTF is caused by a virus. It is spread to humans from the bite of a wood tick.

Symptoms of CTF include: high fever, chills, nausea, and severe headache, and in some instances a red, raised rash. Symptoms begin 4-5 days after the bite of an infected tick. Initially symptoms last a few days, go away, and then return for a few more days.

CTF is found almost exclusively in the western U.S. and Canada, mostly in high mountain areas.

At this time there is no specific treatment for Colorado Tick Fever.

## Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is caused by a bacteria. It is spread from the bite of an infected tick. It can only be transferred if the tick is attached to your skin for at least 24 hours.

## Lyme Disease continued...

Symptoms of Lyme disease include, (early stage Lyme disease) fever, headache, and muscle aches, 70-80% of people will develop a distinct ring-like rash that can look like a “bull’s-eye”, this rash is called erythema migrans. If left untreated, infection can spread to the joints, the heart, and nervous system.

Lyme disease is mostly found in the eastern and upper mid-west regions of the U.S., as well as in the pacific-northwest. Studies have indicated that Lyme disease is not endemic to Utah, though a specific tick species (*Ixodes pacificus*) that can carry Lyme disease is found in Utah.

Lyme disease is treated with antibiotics.

## Tick-borne Relapsing Fever (TBRF)

TBRF is a disease characterized by relapsing or recurring episodes of fever, that can be accompanied by headache, muscle/joint pain, and nausea. TBRF is caused by a spiral shaped bacteria transmitted to humans by infected ticks.

Most cases of TBRF occur in summer months and are associated with sleeping in rustic cabins in the mountains.

TBRF is treated with antibiotics.

## Ehrlichiosis

Ehrlichiosis is a tick-borne disease caused by the Ehrlichia bacteria.

Symptoms include: fever, muscle aches, weakness and headache (no rash). Symptoms appear 5-10 days after the bite of an infected tick.

Ehrlichiosis is mostly found in the southeast and south central part of the U.S.

Ehrlichiosis is treated with antibiotics.

# Ticks Found in Utah

(<http://www.cdc.gov/ticks/transmission.html>)

Western Blacklegged Tick (*Ixodes pacificus*) distribution in the United States



Rocky Mountain Wood Tick (*Dermacentor andersoni*) distribution in the United States



## Additional tickborne disease resources

[http://health.utah.gov/epi/fact\\_sheets/Default.htm](http://health.utah.gov/epi/fact_sheets/Default.htm)

<http://www.cdc.gov/ticks/diseases/>

[http://health.utah.gov/epi/diseases/tick-borne\\_disease/plan/TickborneDisease-Plan101207.pdf](http://health.utah.gov/epi/diseases/tick-borne_disease/plan/TickborneDisease-Plan101207.pdf)