



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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## **Residents urged to take action to prevent tick bites this season**

*Lyme disease cases up 168% in last five years*

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is encouraging Michigan residents to take steps to avoid tick bites while enjoying the outdoors. Tick-borne diseases, particularly Lyme disease and anaplasmosis, are increasing across the state.

Lyme disease cases in Michigan have increased by 168% over the last five years. The state recorded 1,215 cases in 2024, as compared to 452 cases in 2020. Anaplasmosis cases in Michigan have seen an almost fivefold increase over the last five years, with 82 cases in 2024 compared to 17 in 2020.

“Preventing tick bites is the best way to prevent tick-borne diseases, including Lyme disease and anaplasmosis,” said Dr. Natasha Bagdasarian, chief medical executive. “If you find a tick attached to your body, promptly remove it. Monitor your health, and if you experience fever, rash, muscle or joint aches or other symptoms, or if you suspect a tick has been attached for more than 24 hours, consult with your medical provider.”

Lyme disease, caused by the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi*, is the most common tick-borne disease in Michigan. Anaplasmosis, caused by the bacterium *Anaplasma phagocytophilum*, is the second most common tick-borne disease and cases are increasing, particularly in the northern parts of the state.

Both Lyme Disease and anaplasmosis are transmitted by *Ixodes scapularis*, commonly known as the blacklegged or deer tick. The blacklegged tick is well-established in parts of Michigan’s Upper and Lower Peninsulas and has been expanding its range over the years.

Signs and symptoms of tick-borne disease typically begin one to two weeks after a tick bite, often after being in wooded or brushy areas where ticks commonly live. Early symptoms can be non-specific and include fever or chills, rash, headache, fatigue and muscle aches. Early treatment with appropriate antibiotics can decrease the risk of serious complications.

People can protect themselves against Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases by following these tips:

### **Avoid tick-infested areas.**

- As ticks live in grassy, brushy and wooded areas, individuals should walk in the center of trails to avoid contact with overgrown grass, brush and leaf litter at trail edges.

- Dogs and cats can encounter ticks outdoors and bring them into the home. Talk with your veterinarian about the best tick prevention products.

### **Use insect repellent.**

- Apply an EPA-registered repellent on exposed skin. Find a repellent product that is [right for you](#).
- Treat clothes (especially pants, socks and shoes) with permethrin, which kills ticks on contact or buy clothes that are pre-treated. Do not use permethrin directly on skin.
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions when applying repellents.

### **Perform daily tick checks.**

- Always check for ticks on yourself and your animals after being outdoors, including in your own yard.
- Inspect all body surfaces carefully and remove attached ticks carefully with tweezers.
- To remove a tick, grasp the tick firmly and as closely to the skin as possible. With steady, even pressure, pull the tick's body upward and away from the skin. Cleanse the area with an antiseptic.

### **Bathe or shower.**

- Bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors (preferably within two hours) to wash off and more easily find ticks.
- Wash clothing in hot water and dry on high heat to kill ticks in clothing.

Not all ticks spread the same germs. MDHHS can help to identify ticks you may encounter. Residents can email photos of ticks to [MDHHS-Bugs@michigan.gov](mailto:MDHHS-Bugs@michigan.gov) for identification. Michigan citizens can also submit ticks to MDHHS for identification free of charge.

For more information on Lyme disease and other tickborne conditions, or how to submit your tick and/or photo of a tick, visit [Michigan.gov/Lyme](http://Michigan.gov/Lyme).

Additional information nationally is available at [CDC.gov/Lyme](http://CDC.gov/Lyme).

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