

Prevention of Tick-borne Diseases (TBD)

Ticks are small, insect-like arachnids—relatives of scorpions, mites, and spiders—that wait on plants or leaf litter for an unsuspecting mouse, deer, dog, or person to brush against them. Once contact is made, they latch on, seeking skin where they can attach and take a blood meal. In the process, ticks can transmit disease-causing bacteria, parasites, or viruses. Different tick species spread different tick-borne diseases (TBD).



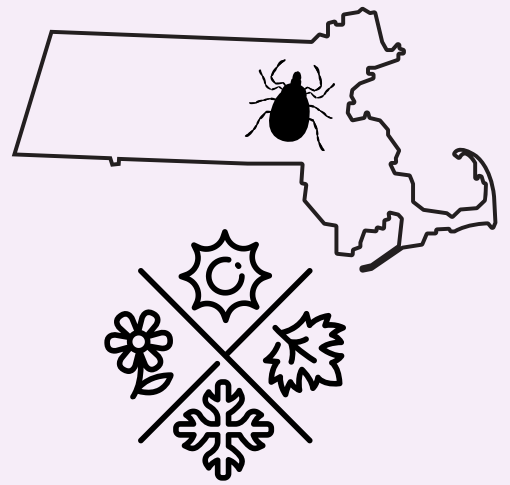
In Massachusetts, ticks are known carriers of diseases such as **Lyme disease** (The most common TBD), **anaplasmosis**, **babesiosis**, and others. While treatments exist for most of these diseases, the best strategy is prevention: avoid tick bites when possible and remove ticks promptly before they have time to transmit pathogens.

Tick Activity in Massachusetts

According to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the Commonwealth typically experiences two peaks in tick activity:

- Spring/Summer Peak: Late March or early April through August
- Fall Peak: October through November

* Less harsh winters allow ticks to survive throughout the season.



Preventing Tick-borne Disease

Prevention involves simple, common-sense steps:

Use permethrin-treated clothing or DEET-based repellents when outdoors.
Homemade tick repellents have NOT proven to be more effective.
Essential oil-based repellents can be harmful to pets and young children

Stay on established trails while hiking

Shower within two hours of being in tick habitats and check your body for ticks daily after spending time outside.

Tumble dry on high to kill ticks in clothing

Comb pets after spending time outdoors to remove crawling ticks



Massachusetts DPH Recommends...

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MassDPH) recommends checking the following areas for ticks:

- Inside and behind the ears
- Along your hairline
- Back of your neck
- Armpits
- Groin
- Behind your knees
- Between your toes
- Legs
- Look for new “freckles” (ticks can be very small)



Tick Removal

If you find a tick attached to your skin, don't panic:

Use fine-point tweezers to grip the tick as close to the skin as possible.
Pull straight out with steady pressure.

You can also use a **tick key**, available at many stores (including Dover Market and Amazon).
For guidance, the CDC offers helpful instructions and videos on tick removal.
Ticks usually need to be attached for **24 hours or more** to transmit disease—but not always.



After a Tick Bite

Contact a healthcare provider to discuss if you should take a preventive dose of doxycycline.



Monitor for symptoms, which can include

Headache

Fever

Fatigue

Rash, A commonly discussed symptom of early Lyme Disease (often centered on the bite site, appearing 3-30 days later)

New onset pain of a single joint

Not all individuals show symptoms, and Lyme disease is most treatable when caught early, usually with a short course of antibiotics.

For More Information

Visit the [Massachusetts Department of Public Health website](#) or watch the MassDPH videos on YouTube:

- [Protect Yourself From Tick Bites](#)
- [Keep Ticks Away From Your Yard](#)
- [Remove Ticks Safely From Your Skin](#)

Check out the following Article:

- [Bite-sized Threats of Ticks](#)



Dover Board of Health

The Dover Board of Health is committed to maintaining the health and safety needs for all residents in the town of Dover, MA. Dover’s heavily wooded landscape and abundance of nature makes our town particularly populous for different tick species. The Board of Health reminds residents that TICKS ARE EVERYWHERE! In order to avoid any tick-borne diseases, it is crucial to protect yourself, pets, and loved ones from having a tick on their body, especially for an extended period of time.



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Date: 7/20/2022 Revised 5/15/25

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- New onset of pain in a single joint

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For More Information

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[Keep Ticks Away From Your Yard](#)

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