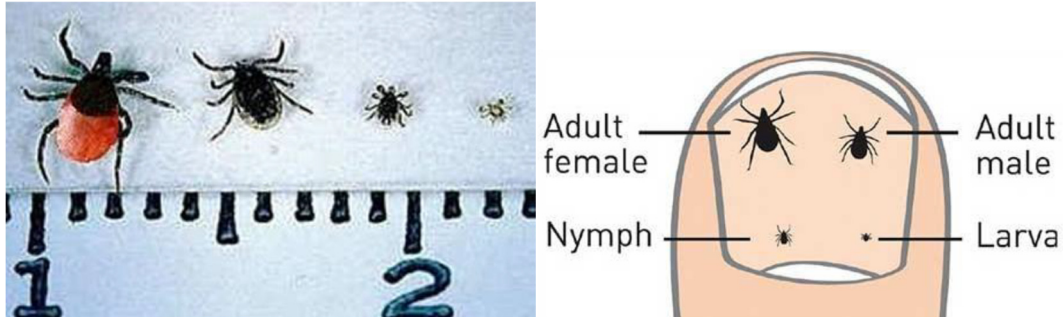


TICKS: THE ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Ticks - What are they?

The presence of ticks in the countryside is a simple fact of life. They are small creatures, the young being not much bigger than a pin head. They can be picked up in grassland and woodland areas, especially where deer or other animals occur and are most common in long grass, rough vegetation or woodland. Ticks attach themselves to deer, livestock, domestic animals, and humans and feed by biting through the skin and sucking blood. They may be present throughout the year but are particularly active between May and October especially if the weather is warm. Ticks like to attach themselves in dark, warm areas of the body such as armpits, groin, ankles and hair line. They bury their heads with only the abdomen showing. They will stay on the body for 5-7 days until they are swollen with blood and then they will fall off. They may appear as a speck of dirt or a mole.

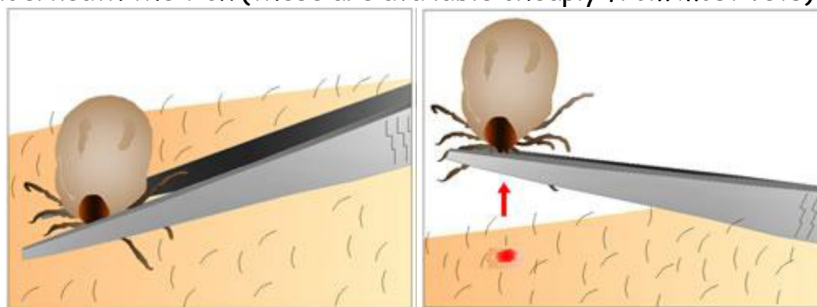


Lyme Disease - What is it?

Most tick bites are, essentially, harmless. However a small number of ticks carry bacteria which can develop into Lyme Disease in humans. Symptoms of Lyme Disease usually show a few days to several weeks after being bitten. Early signs might show as an expanding reddish rash like a bullseye around the bite area, sometimes very faint. Other symptoms are like the flu, with swollen glands near the site, mild headaches, tiredness and aching muscles and joints. Lyme Disease should not be left untreated. It can affect the skin and, in more serious cases, may also cause partial paralysis of the face, painful joints and tingling or loss of sensation in the limbs. If acted upon quickly, it will respond quickly to effective antibiotic treatment. If left longer, the more serious symptoms may require longer and stronger treatment. If in any doubt or concern, consult your doctor or hospital and mention the tick bite.

What do I do if I find a tick?

Don't panic! Even if you are bitten by a tick it doesn't mean you will get ill, as only a few ticks carry diseases. Just make sure the tick is removed as quickly as possible and in the right way. The best way to remove one is to use a special tool which hooks underneath the tick (these are available cheaply from most vets) or with precision tweezers.



1) Grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible and pull upwards with steady, even pressure. **Do not twist or jerk** the tick as this may leave the mouth behind and cause infection. Remove any parts left in the skin with tweezers or a sterile needle.

2) **Do not squeeze** or crush the body of the tick, because its fluids (saliva etc) may be harmful.

3) **Do not handle** the tick with bare hands as fluid may enter through breaks in your skin, or if you touch eyes, nostrils or mouth.

4) After removing the tick, disinfect the bite site and wash hands with soap and water.