



HOW TO TACKLE

# TICK CONTROL

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Ticks are a growing concern in Canada, especially with the ever-increasing prevalence of Lyme disease. In this guide, find out how you can tackle ticks, from tick bite prevention to tick-proofing your property.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                     |    |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| An Introduction to Ticks            | 3  |
| Tick Life Cycle                     | 4  |
| Tick Identification                 | 5  |
| Tick Prone Areas                    | 6  |
| What is Lyme Disease?               | 7  |
| How Ticks Transmit Lyme Disease     | 8  |
| You've Got a Tick Bite... Now What? | 9  |
| How To Avoid Tick Bites             | 10 |
| How to Tick Proof your Property     | 11 |
| Tick Barrier Protection             | 12 |



# AN INTRODUCTION TO TICKS

Ticks are tiny arachnids, and just like their spider relatives, have 8 legs. Unlike adult spiders, ticks are ectoparasites, which means they stay alive by feeding on the blood of mammals, birds, and - you guessed it - humans.

Ticks cannot jump or fly; instead, they climb vegetation and wait for a host to come into contact with them, when they attach themselves and begin feeding.

Typically, ticks live in wooded or grassy areas, like forested properties, provincial and national parks, and the woods. Ticks are most active in Spring and Fall, but will begin biting as soon as temperatures are consistently above 7 degrees.

Once better weather hits, so do the ticks. Right now, ticks across the country are gearing up for a blood meal, which is required for them to keep their own clocks ticking.



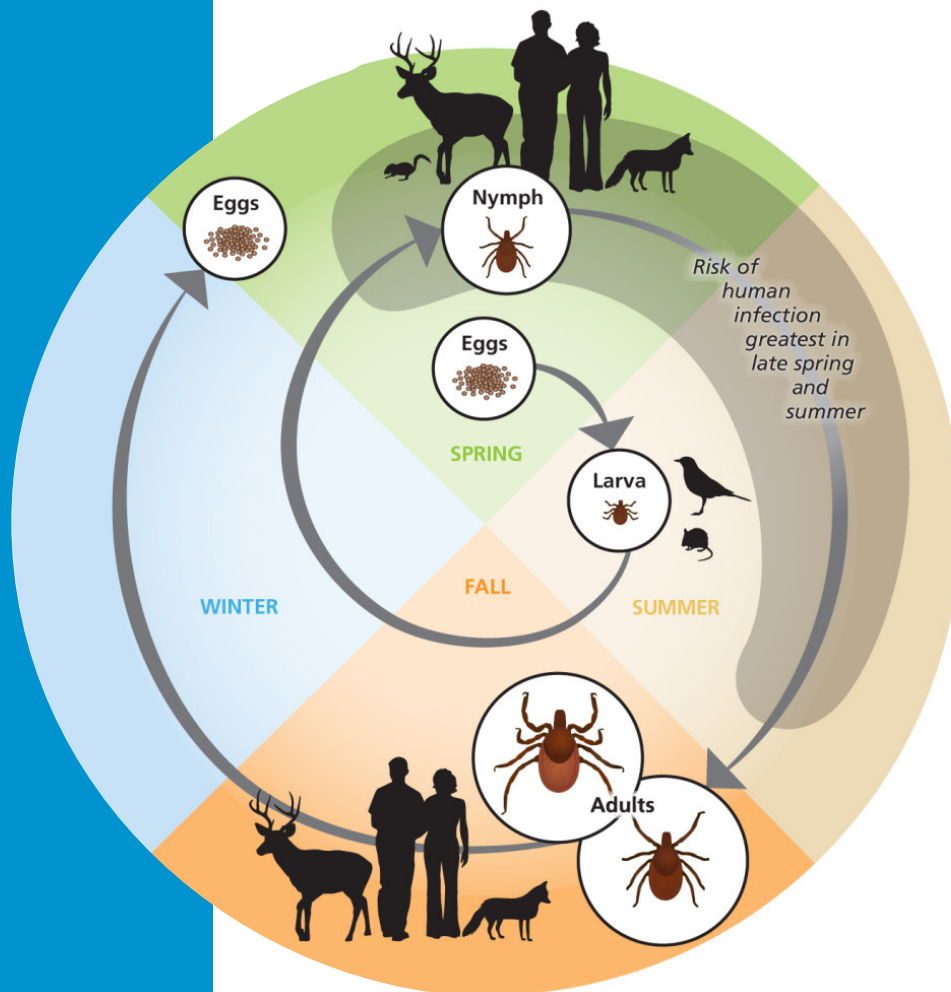
# TICK LIFE CYCLE

Ticks have 4 life stages; egg, larvae, nymph, and adult.

Female ticks lay thousands of eggs on the ground, which then hatch into larvae, known as 'seed ticks'. These seed ticks then climb up on to low vegetation so they can attach to small animals that pass by, such as mice, rabbits, or birds. In the larvae stage, ticks only have 6 legs.

After feeding for 2 to 9 days on their chosen hosts, the larvae digest the blood and turn into nymphs, now with 8 legs. Nymphs then attach themselves to a second host and feed for a while before becoming adult ticks.

This entire cycle can last up to 3 years.



# TICK IDENTIFICATION

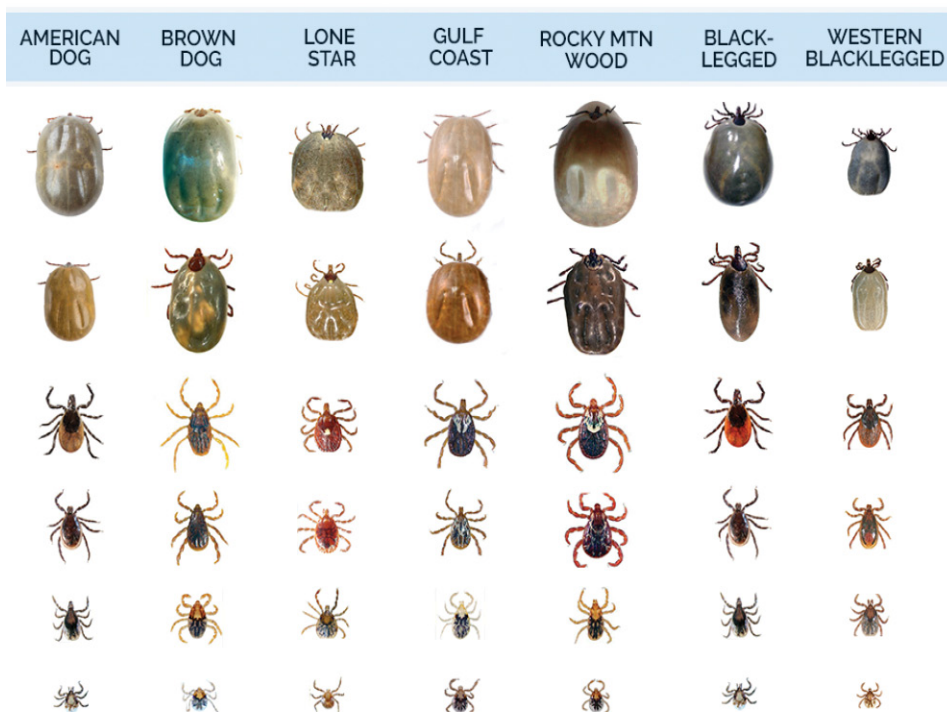
There are dozens of tick species found across Canada, but two of the most common are American Dog Ticks and Blacklegged Ticks.

Although the habitat for most ticks is very similar, there are some distinguishing factors that can help identify certain species of ticks. It's very important to be able to accurately identify them, as some ticks can be the primary vector for harmful diseases.

Blacklegged Ticks (also known as Deer Ticks) are the known vector for Lyme disease, so being able to tell them apart from other ticks is increasingly important. With Lyme disease on the rise in Canada, anyone who loves the great outdoors, has a pet, or lives in a tick-prone area is at risk.

American Dog Ticks have a unique pattern on their backs, which help make them identifiable against Blacklegged Ticks, which have no distinguishable pattern.

American Dog Ticks are also larger than Blacklegged Ticks, roughly double the size.



# TICK PRONE AREAS

Areas where ticks and Lyme disease have been confirmed over a number of years of active field surveillance are called endemic areas. This includes many provincial parks and regions in Southern, Eastern, and North Western Ontario, Southern Manitoba, Southern British Columbia, Southern New Brunswick, Southern Nova Scotia, and Southern Quebec.



# WHAT IS LYME DISEASE?

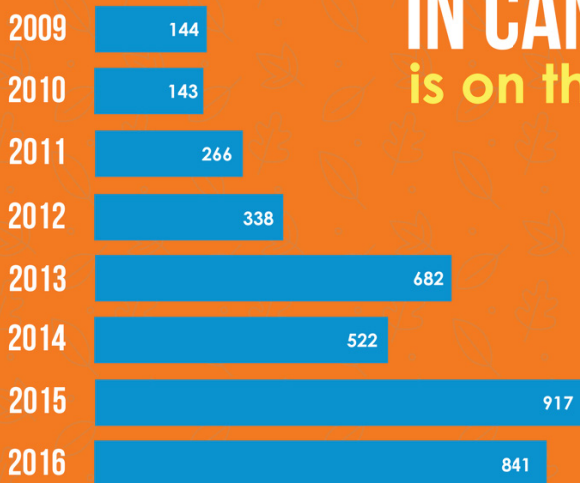
Lyme disease is the most common vector-borne disease in North America. The disease was first recognised in Connecticut in 1975, and is caused by a bacteria called *Borrelia burgdorferi*. It is transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected Blacklegged tick.

Blacklegged ticks (also known as deer ticks) are widespread throughout Canada, due to tick larvae and nymphs attaching themselves to migratory birds. Bird-borne ticks thus create the possibility of infectious tick bites almost anywhere in Canada.

Lyme disease can have serious effects on people and pets and the symptoms can differ from person to person. Signs and symptoms of Lyme disease can include one or a combination of the following, with varying degrees of severity:

- Skin Rash
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Abnormal heartbeat
- Fever or chills
- Muscle and joint pain
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Paralysis
- Spasms or weakness
- Mental confusion
- Numbness or tingling
- Nervous system disorders
- Swollen lymph nodes

## LYME DISEASE IN CANADA is on the rise



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# HOW TICKS TRANSMIT LYME DISEASE

Ticks are an opportunistic pest. For you or your pet to contract Lyme disease, you would need to have been bitten by an infected blacklegged tick.

For this to happen, a tick would have attached itself to you or your pet. Ticks don't jump or fly; instead, they rest on low growing grasses or plants and wait for a host (human or animal) to pass by. When you or your pet brush past the plant, the tick will cling to clothing or fur, before crawling around looking for a place to attach itself and start feeding.

Once the tick has bitten, bacteria enters the skin and eventually makes its way into the bloodstream. If the tick looks swollen, it may have been feeding for a long enough time to transmit bacteria, which is why it's so important to take the correct precautions if you or your pet have been in tick-prone areas.



# YOU'VE GOT A TICK BITE... NOW WHAT?

In most cases, it takes around 36 to 48 hours of attachment for Lyme disease to be transmitted, so if you discover an attached tick, it's important to carefully extract it as soon as possible.

## Removing ticks

- Using clean tweezers, carefully grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible. Pull slowly upward, but try not to twist or crush the tick.
- Once the tick is removed, wash the area where you were bitten with soap and water. You may also disinfect the area with alcohol or hand sanitizer. Wash your hands with soap and water.
- If parts of the tick's mouth break off and remain in your skin, remove them with tweezers.

Visit your health care provider if you cannot remove:

- parts of the tick's mouth in your skin
- the tick itself because it has buried itself deep into your skin

## Saving Ticks

If you can't submit the tick for testing right away, then:

- Save the tick in a plastic bag that you can seal or a pill bottle. Record the location and date of the bite.
- Store the container for up to 10 days in the refrigerator for live ticks or freezer, for dead ticks



# HOW TO AVOID TICK BITES

The best prevention against contracting Lyme disease is to avoid a tick attaching itself to you or your pet. Here's what you can do to avoid getting a dreaded tick bite;

- Use insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, or permethrin. Added bonus: you'll repel mosquitoes, too!
- Wear closed-toe shoes and long-sleeved clothing
- Tuck your pants into your socks. You'll look a bit ridiculous, but it works!
- Wear light coloured clothing to help you spot potential ticks easier
- Wash yourself as soon as you get home to get rid of any loose ticks
- Do a full body check on yourself, your kids, or your pets if you've come back from a tick prone area



# HOW TO TICK-PROOF YOUR PROPERTY

Thankfully, there are a number of preventative measures you can take to help minimize the risks of ticks around your home. Here's how to prep your property;

- Keep tall grasses mowed
- Keep vegetation trimmed
- Use deer fencing to keep deer out (they're notorious for ticks!)
- Restrict the use of groundcover, such as pachysandra in areas frequented by family and roaming pets.
- Get rid of any leaf litter or weeds at the edge of your lawn
- Remove brush and leaves around stone walls or wood piles
- Move wood piles away from the house
- Keep your pets and kids out of the woods to avoid bringing ticks back to your home
- Move kids swings or sandboxes away from the woodland edge
- Wash clothes in hot water if you've just come back from a tick-ridden area
- Use a professional **tick control service** to eliminate the risk of ticks



# TICK BARRIER PROTECTION

Ticks are notorious for spreading Lyme Disease, which can affect you, your family, and your pets. A highly effective way of preventing potentially harmful tick bites is to protect your property with professional barrier control.

At **mosquito.buzz**, licensed and trained technicians visit your property during Spring and Fall when ticks are the most active, targeting areas where they live, rest, and hide, such as tall grasses and low-lying vegetation. Our control products are approved by Health Canada, and are safe for use around mammals, so you won't need to worry about unnecessary harm to your kids or pets.



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