



Minnesota Metro Medical Reserve Corps

A NATIONAL NETWORK OF LOCAL GROUPS OF VOLUNTEERS COMMITTED TO IMPROVING THE PUBLIC HEALTH, EMERGENCY RESPONSE, AND RESILIENCY OF THEIR COMMUNITIES.

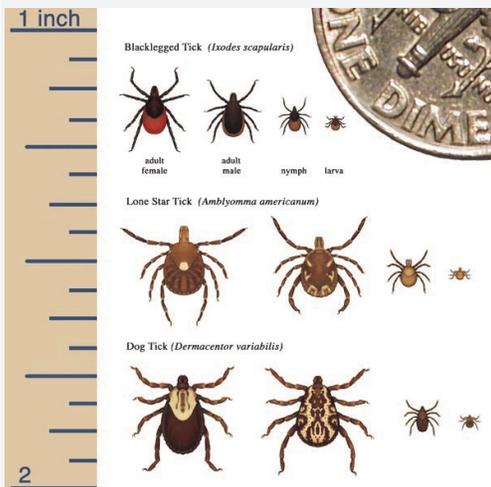
It's Tick Season in Minnesota!

How to prepare yourself, your pets, and your yard

Although no Minnesotans are strangers to ticks, the arrival of Tick season is a good time to remind ourselves and our neighbors about important information regarding tick-borne illness and key prevention strategies. The Minnesota Department of Health and many Local Health Departments actively monitor for tick-borne diseases, which are on the rise.

areas, it is important to take precautions and minimize the risk:

- Stay on well-cleared trails and avoid tall vegetation
- Use a repellent with at least 20% DEET (for use on skin) – follow label instructions
- Wear permethrin treated clothing and gear (never apply directly on the skin) – follow label instructions
- Wear long sleeves, pants and light colored clothing to more easily spot ticks
- Wear closed-toe shoes and tuck your pants into your socks, or wear gaiters
- Scan clothes and exposed skin frequently for ticks
- Take a shower within 2 hours of returning indoors



Minnesota is home to several varieties of ticks, including the blacklegged (deer) tick, American dog (wood) tick and the Lone Star tick. Each type of tick is capable of carrying one or more infectious

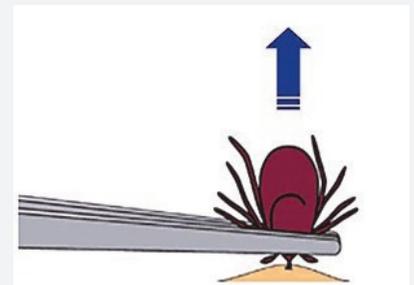
diseases. Some tick-borne diseases can lead to serious complications, even in previously health people. If a rash or any of the above symptoms develop after a tick bite, or even after outdoor activities, it is important to see a doctor right away. Symptoms can appear a few days after a bite, or up to a month later.

Tick Prevention Strategies

Ticks cling to plants and grasses in warm, humid environments in wooded or grassy areas, and can be picked up in passing by clothing or skin. When hiking, camping or enjoying other outdoor activities in these

If you find a tick attached to your body, remove it as soon as possible

- Use a fine-point tweezers or commercial tick removal product
- Do not squeeze or twist the tick's body
- Grasp the tick close to your skin and pull straight out with steady pressure
- Thoroughly wash the area and apply antiseptic
- Ticks can be very small and sometimes go unnoticed. Taking a shower or bath, and drying your clothes in a hot dryer for 20-30 minutes can remove or kill any ticks you failed to notice.



Most people bitten by a tick will not contract a disease, because not all ticks are infected with diseases. In most cases, ticks that are infected usually have to be attached to the host for several hours to several days to transmit disease. Prompt removal of an attached tick will significantly reduce the risk of infection.

If possible, save the removed tick on a piece of scotch tape and record tick removal date on tape. If you later develop symptoms, this action could help facilitate a diagnosis and treatment plan. See your physician if you develop symptoms of tick-borne disease, including fever, flu like illness or a rash within a few weeks of a tick bite. At the visit, be sure to tell your doctor about your tick exposure.

Creating a Tick Safe Yard

Ticks and their hosts (including mice, chipmunks, and other small mammals) can be found in grassy, bushy areas around the outside of a home. These areas provide shelter from the sun, moisture, easy access to small mammals, and a place to hide – all important elements in promoting the tick life cycle. Fortunately, some easy clean up can greatly reduce the risk of encountering ticks while enjoying the outdoor space. Here are some tips for creating a tick-safe zone around the home:

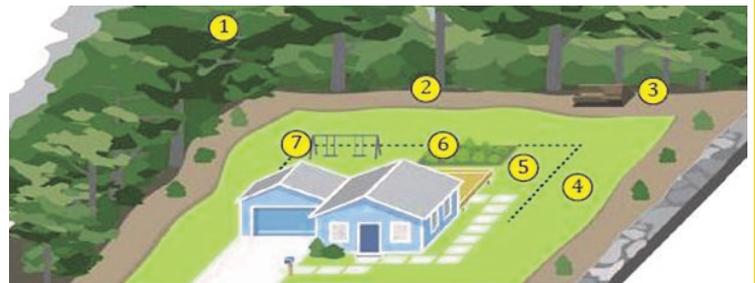
- Remove leaf litter
- Clear tall grasses and brush around homes and at the edge of lawns
- Place a 3-ft wide barrier of wood chips or gravel between lawns and wooded areas to restrict tick migration into recreational areas
- Mow the lawn frequently
- Stack wood neatly and in a dry area (discourages small mammal nesting)
- Keep playground equipment, decks, and patios away from yard edges and trees
- Discourage unwelcome animals (such as deer, raccoons, and stray dogs) from entering your yard
- Consider applying an approved pesticide - always follow the label instructions

Protect Your Pets

Some pets can catch the same tick-borne diseases as humans. Dogs are especially at risk. Ticks can attach anywhere on an animal, but are most commonly found on their ear, shoulder, and upper leg areas.

Following these guidelines can help protect your pets:

- Check daily for ticks, especially after time outdoors
- If found on your pet, remove the tick right away
- Talk to your veterinarian about tick control products
- If you own a dog, ask your veterinarian about the Lyme disease vaccine
- Have a veterinarian conduct a tick check at each exam
- Talk to your veterinarian about tick-borne diseases in your area
- Reduce tick habitat in your yard
- Other domesticated animals might also be at risk for catching a tick-borne disease, including cats and horses. Talk to your vet about specific products and tick control strategies that would be appropriate for your animal(s).



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| 1 | Tick zone | Avoid areas with forest and brush where deer, rodents, and ticks are common. |
| 2 | Wood chip barrier | Use a 3 ft. barrier of wood chips or rock to separate the "tick zone" and rock walls from the lawn. |
| 3 | Wood pile | Keep wood piles on the wood chip barrier, away from the home. |
| 4 | Tick migration zone | Maintain a 9 ft. barrier of lawn between the wood chips and areas such as patios, gardens, and play sets. |
| 5 | Tick safe zone | Enjoy daily living activities such as gardening and outdoor play inside this perimeter. |
| 6 | Gardens | Plant deer resistant crops. If desired, an 8-ft. fence can keep deer out of the yard. |
| 7 | Play sets | Keep play sets in the "tick safe zone" in sunny areas where ticks have difficulty surviving. |

Based on a diagram by K. Stafford, Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

For more information:

- [Centers for Disease Control](#)
- [Minnesota Department of Health](#)
- [Lyme disease prevention](#)

Psychological First Aid: Not just a Tool for Emergency Response

Psychological First Aid (PFA) Training has been a pivotal training provided to MRC and other response staff in preparation for working in a Family Assistance Center, Reunification Center, Shelter, or other emergency response role. PFA was created by the Minnesota Department of Health several years ago as a versatile community support model that did not require its users to be mental health professionals. The course helps individuals understand the normal stress reactions to help prepare them for potential experiences with people who have been through a traumatic/stressful situation and to help promote resiliency in individuals effected by a traumatic situation.

It goes without saying that the world we live in today is full of stressors. Some individuals are effected more so than others, which is leading to a rise in mental health and well-being issues across all ages. Recognizing that the stressors surrounding us each and every day may be contributing to more negative interactions, it was decided that in honor of Mental Health Awareness Month, Bloomington Public Health's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator would team up with the Bloomington Police Department to conduct a Mental Health and De-Escalation Tactics course for all city staff.

Given the versatility of PFA training, it was thought that due to the ever increasing stressors going on all around us that PFA may be more applicable in everyday situations. The hybrid course discussed the principles of PFA, including examples of common stress reactions, and PFA techniques in the context of working with citizens and coworkers. The De-escalation portion of the training expanded upon some of the PFA techniques, such as active listening, body language, and using stress management. Additionally, self-care was discussed and resources for employees to use were provided.

Overall, 61 City of Bloomington employees attended the training. Staff were very receptive to understanding the techniques presented and want to know even more about PFA and de-escalation, along with other information about mental health and well-being.

If you are interested in more information and training opportunities about mental health topics, the [National Alliance on Mental Illness Minnesota](#) is a great resource that offers free classes for Minnesotans.



Article Submitted by City of Bloomington MRC Coordinator – Amanda Lemke

Dakota County MRC General Meeting

There has not been an opportunity for MRC volunteers to come together to celebrate our accomplishments and spend some time getting to know each other in a long time. Therefore, I am organizing a Dakota County MRC General Meeting on Thursday, August 2 from 6-8pm at the Schaar's Bluff Gathering Center! There will be food, recognitions, and planning for the next year of MRC trainings and activities. RSVP to attend [here](#)! Attendance is highly encouraged. Feel free to contact me with questions: katrina.devore@co.dakota.mn.us or 952-891-7166. I look forward to seeing you there!

