Beware of Ticks!!
Risk of Human Infections greatest in Late Spring and Summer

A tick is a small blood-sucking mite. It normally lives on blood from wild animals but sometimes it attaches itself to humans. Occasionally the tick carries a small bacterium called *Borrelia burgdorferi* in its stomach. This can cause Lyme disease, an infection that can affect the skin, cause partial paralysis of the face (Bells Palsy) and serious illness of the nervous system, joints and heart. Lyme disease is an infection that is spread by certain ticks. Symptoms of the illness in humans include red bull's-eye rash, fatigue, fever, flulike symptoms, headaches and sore muscles and joints.

### Did you know?
*Ticks are arachnids, relatives of spiders.*
- Ticks live in wooded areas, brushy fields, and around your home.
- Ticks survive by eating blood from their hosts.
- Ticks can pass infections from one host to the next, including humans.

It is important to take preventive measures against ticks year-round however, be extra vigilant in warmer months (April-September) when ticks are most active.

**Protect Yourself from Ticks:**

When you hike, camp or play where ticks are found:
- Wear bug spray.
- Wear light-colored clothes because it is easier to see ticks on them.
- Wear long pants and a long-sleeved shirt.
- Tuck your pants into your socks or boots and tuck in your shirt.

### Common symptoms of tick-related illnesses:
- Fever/chills/flulike symptoms
- Aches and pains
- Rash
• Walk in the center of trails, rather than through the brush.
• Control the brush around your home.
• Avoid wooded and bushy areas with high grass and leaf litter.

Finding Ticks on Your Body

Wear light-colored clothing to more easily find ticks that are crawling on you.

Conduct a full-body tick check using a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body upon return from tick-infested areas. Parents should check their children for ticks under the arms, in and around the ears, inside the belly button, behind the knees, between the legs, around the waist, and especially in their hair.

Examine gear and pets. Ticks can ride into the home on clothing and pets, then attach to a person later, so carefully examine pets, coats, and day packs. Tumbling clothes in a dryer on the highest heat for at least one hour may help kill remaining ticks.

Shower soon after being outdoors.
Showering within two hours of coming indoors has been shown to reduce your risk of being bitten by a tick.

Ticks are very small: Relative size of ticks at different stages (left). Ticks can’t fly or jump, but many tick species wait in a position known as "questing". (photo on your right)

How to remove a tick:

• The best way to remove a tick is by grabbing at the mouthparts with needle-nose tweezers or tissue and pull straight out.
• Wash where the tick bit you.
• Wash your hands.
• If you get sick after a tick bite you should go to the doctor.

Life cycle of blacklegged ticks that can transmit anaplasmosis, babesiosis, and Lyme disease
Source: http://www.cdc.gov/ticks/