



# Technical Update

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## Tick Season

The 2019 tick season is almost here. In Colorado, ticks are most active during late Spring, early Summer, and mid-Fall. As warmer weather draws people outdoors to do yard work and enjoy nature, the risk of encountering ticks increases as does the likelihood of contracting tick-borne diseases.

Over 30 species of tick can be found in Colorado. The most common ticks are the American dog tick (*Dermacentor variabilis*), Rocky Mountain wood tick (*Dermacentor andersoni*), and the Brown dog tick (*Rhipicephalus sanguineus*). These ticks can carry diseases harmful to humans.

Ticks that carry Lyme disease are not native to Colorado. No confirmed cases of the disease have originated here; however, residents who travel out of state are at risk and should be aware of the symptoms of this potentially severe neurological disease. The most common tick-borne disease in Colorado is Colorado tick fever, a virus spread by the Rocky Mountain wood tick.

### **How do I Avoid Ticks?**

The best way to avoid a tick-borne disease is to avoid ticks. As this is not always possible, the Center for Disease Control recommends the following:

- Use a tick repellent that contains 20% or more of DEET, picaridin, or IR3535 on exposed skin.
- Wear permethrin-treated clothing.

- Treat clothing, gear, boots, socks, and tents with products containing 0.5% permethrin. Do not apply to skin.
- Perform a tick check after being in wooded, bushy, or grassy areas.

### **What if I Find a Tick on Me?**

If you find a tick on you, follow the steps below. You will need a pair of fine-tipped tweezers, a sealed plastic bag/container, and disinfectant. Visit [www.cdc.gov/ticks/removing\\_a\\_tick.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ticks/removing_a_tick.html) for more information.


- First, place the tweezers as close to the tick's head as possible.
- Then gently squeeze with the tweezers as you pull upward with steady, even pressure.
- Clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol, iodine scrub, or soap and water.
- Dispose of a live tick by submersing it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed container for later identification, wrapping it tightly in tape, or flushing it down a toilet.

You may also consider taking a picture of the tick with your smart phone. This can help with tick identification and create a timestamp of when you were bitten.

### **Tick Bite Symptoms**

Symptoms can vary, but often include fever and a rash. Most symptoms appear within a few days to weeks after being bitten; however, some people do not develop any symptoms. If you develop a rash or fever after being bitten, seek treatment immediately and tell your doctor about the bite.

### **What This Means for Counties**

If you will be spending time outdoors this summer be sure to take proper precautions and watch out for tick bite symptoms. For more information, contact CTSI at (303) 861 0507. 

A PDF of this Technical Update is available [here](#). Please visit <http://www.ctsi.org/technical-updates> to view past Technical Updates.

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