

HAZARD ALERT

Protect yourself from tick bites and Lyme disease

Ticks are a reality in northern Ontario forests. It is important to protect yourself against contact with this parasite: a common carrier of various diseases.

Hazard overview

Ticks:

- Live in wooded, grassy, and brushy areas.
- Can carry Lyme disease and other illnesses.
- Climb up on and attach to someone who brushes by, then bite into the skin to feed.

Safety precautions

To stay safe:

1. Complete a job hazard analysis:

- Identify areas where workers may be exposed, and use the assessment to plan appropriate protective measures

2. Review seasonal and environmental conditions:

- Be aware of the the prevalence of ticks by season (spring through late fall) and weather conditions (warm, humid days)

3. Prepare for work and wear protective clothing:

- Long pants and long sleeves
- Light-coloured clothing (making it easier to spot ticks)
- Tuck pants into socks and shirts into pants
- Use insect repellent that is effective against ticks, or treated clothing or gear if available



Ticks are parasites that feed on blood from humans and animals.

Call to action

While working:

- Stay on clear, well-used trails
- Avoid tall grass, shrubs, and leaf litter
- Take breaks in cleared or gravel areas
- Check clothing and gear for ticks
- Do tick self-checks during breaks

At the end of your shift:

- Perform a full-body tick check
- Shower within two hours of being outdoors
- Inspect your clothing and gear before entering vehicles or buildings
- Place your clothing and gear in the dryer on high heat for a minimum of 10 minutes before washing them
- Report tick bites or findings immediately to your supervisor
- Monitor for symptoms following a bite

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Symptoms from a tick bite present themselves within thirty days of exposure. Be on the lookout for:

- Rash or 'bullseye' around the bite
- Fever or chills
- Fatigue, muscle, or joint pain
- Headache or flu-like symptoms

While out in the field, you should consider keeping a kit on you to address tick bites shortly after they happen. Items to have on hand include tweezers, latex gloves, and soap and water or rubbing alcohol.

Steps to remove a tick

1. Use clean, fine-tipped tweezers.
2. Grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.
3. Pull upward with steady, even pressure. (Do not twist or jerk.)
4. If the mouth parts break off, try to remove them with tweezers.
5. Clean the bite area with soap and water or alcohol using your hands.
6. Place the tick in a sealed bag or container for identification if needed.
7. Record the bite date, location on the body, and any symptoms.

Workplace Safety North's Health and Safety Specialists are here to support you with additional information, training, and consulting opportunities. We are here with the goal of seeing every worker home safe and healthy. [Visit our website for more information.](#)