



Top 10

Tick Facts You Need to Know

1. Ticks are active year-round. Although we consider late spring-early summer prime "tick season," you can be bitten by a tick during any month, even the middle of winter.

2. Not all ticks are equally dangerous. Each species and life stage is associated with different risks; that's why tick identification is so important.

3. Lyme disease may be the most common tick-borne infection, but it's just the tip of the iceberg. Ticks vector numerous pathogens including bacteria, viruses, protozoan parasites, and even nematodes.

4. Some ticks can make you allergic to meat. Some people develop Alpha-Gal Syndrome, an allergic immune reaction to mammalian meat products (e.g., beef, pork, lamb, venison, and sometimes dairy products and byproducts such as gelatin) after being bitten by a lone star tick.

5. You can greatly reduce your chances of getting a tick bite by applying tick repellent to your skin and clothes, sticking to the middle of trails, and conducting frequent tick checks.

6. You can make your yard tick-safe with a few key landscaping changes: In the places where you recreate, keep the grass short and remove brush. Ticks need humidity to survive, so they are sensitive to direct sunlight.

7. Ticks don't jump or fall out of trees. This is a common myth, but ticks actually just wait on grass or other plants for a host to walk by so they can grab on. So, if you don't come into contact with vegetation, it's easy to avoid ticks.

8. If you get bitten by a tick, it's important to remove it ASAP. The longer it's attached, the more likely it is to transmit pathogens. Save the tick in a zip-seal bag for medical reference.

9. Most tick-borne infections can be easily treated, but it's important to seek treatment early and stick to it. Delayed treatment or failure to complete the full course of antibiotics or other treatment can lead to lingering symptoms that are more difficult to treat and may have severe complications.

10. Don't forget to keep your pets safe from ticks, too! Talk to your vet about the best anti-tick products to use. Note that products developed for dogs may not be safe for cats. Also, ask your vet about vaccinating your dog against Lyme disease.

For more information about ticks in Delaware:

Visit the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control at de.gov/ticks
and the Delaware Division of Public Health at de.gov/lyme