



NEWS RELEASE

St. Charles County Government

Department of Governmental Communications

*Lisa Dunham, Director
(636) 949-1892*

Preventing Tick Bites

Protect yourself from ticks this summer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gil Copley, Director, Department of Community Health and the Environment
Julie Burkemper, Public Information Officer

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636-949-7477
636-949-7408

St. Charles County - Heading outdoors this summer? Make sure you don't pick up any unwanted baggage along the way—like ticks. Be on the lookout for these pesky creatures that lurk in moist, shaded woods, low-growing brush, dense weeds, or piles of leaves. Ticks can also be found sneaking around your neighborhood—even in your own backyard especially in woodpiles and areas of high grass. One bite from these creepy critters can cause serious and sometimes fatal diseases like Lyme disease or Rocky Mountain spotted fever.

Avoid tick-infested areas!

Walk in the center of trails to avoid ticks on brush. Ticks can be active even on winter days when the ground temperature is 45 degrees Fahrenheit and above.

Dress properly!

Light-colored clothing helps you spot ticks more easily. Wear long pants and long sleeves and tuck the shirt into your pants and the pants into your socks to keep ticks on the outside of your clothes and off your skin.

Use insect repellent!

Repellants discourage tick attachment. You must read the product label to find out how long the formula will last. Repellents containing DEET and Picaridin can be applied to the skin and clothing, but will last only a few hours before reapplication is necessary. Repellents containing permethrin can be sprayed on boots and clothing, and will last for several days. Do not apply permethrin directly to skin, and always follow label directions when using any repellent.

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Do tick checks!

When you're outdoors, even in your own yard, check yourself, children and other family members every two to three hours for ticks. Do this by looking at their clothes and by running your fingers over scalp and skin, looking for small bumps or new "moles". Don't forget your hair, ears, and underarms. At the end of the day, use a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body.

Remove attached ticks immediately!

It is rare for a tick to infect someone until it has been attached for more than four hours. Use fine-point tweezers to grasp the tick around its mouthparts, at the place of attachment next to the skin. Slowly pull the tick away from the skin until the tick is removed. Place the tick in a sealed container or small plastic bag and deposit in the trash. After removing the tick, thoroughly disinfect the bite site and wash your hands with soap and water. If you develop a rash or flu-like symptoms, contact your health care provider immediately.

For more information on public health visit the St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment online at www.scchealth.org

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