

Enjoy the outdoors but 'be tick aware' this Spring

1. WHAT IS A TICK?

Ticks are small, spider-like creatures that feed on the blood of animals, including people.

The size of a tick can vary, with a larva being as small as a tiny freckle, and fully fed females similar in size to a baked bean.

Tick attached to skin



Tick in the environment



2. WHERE DO YOU FIND TICKS?

Ticks live in many habitats but prefer moist areas with leaf litter or longer grass, like in woodland, grassland, moorland, heathland and some urban parks and gardens.

Ticks don't fly or jump. They wait on vegetation for a host to pass by, and then climb on.

They bite and attach to the skin and feed on blood for several days, before dropping off.

Ticks are found throughout the year, but are most active between spring and autumn

3. HOW TO AVOID TICKS

Walk on clearly defined paths to avoid brushing against vegetation

Wear light-coloured clothes so ticks can be spotted and brushed off

Use repellents such as DEET

Carry out a tick check

4. HOW TO DO A TICK CHECK

Check clothes and body regularly for ticks when outdoors and when you get home

Check children and pets as well

Areas that ticks may frequently be found include skin folds, armpits, groin, waistband area, back of the neck and hairline.

Adults are commonly bitten on the legs

Children are commonly bitten on the head or neck area

Bites can occur anywhere on the body and more than one tick can be attached at one time

5. IF YOU HAVE BEEN BITTEN

Remove ticks as soon as possible

Use a pair of fine-tipped tweezers or a tick removal tool.

Grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible and pull upwards slowly and firmly, as mouthparts left in the skin can cause a local infection

Clean the bite area and monitor it for several weeks for any changes.

Ticks can transmit bacteria that cause diseases such as Lyme disease.

Contact your GP promptly if you feel unwell with flu-like symptoms or Develop a spreading circular red rash - tell them you were bitten by a tick or have recently spent time outdoors

Tick removal with tweezers



Lyme disease bullseye rash

