

# BEFORE A TICK BITES



## PROTECT YOURSELF!

Some ticks can transmit several diseases. Lyme disease is transmitted by the bite of a Blacklegged (deer) tick when it is infected by a bacteria. A tick measures between 1 and 3 millimetres before it feeds on blood. Its painless bite can cause a rash that quickly extends to over 5 centimetres, and sometimes fever, headaches, fatigue and muscle and joint pain. If the disease is not treated promptly, it can cause serious health problems later.

Ticks especially live in forests, wooded areas, piles of dead leaves, shrubs and tall grass. We might find them everywhere in Québec. However, the risk of being bitten is greater in southern Québec.

1 to 3 mm



Before meals



After meals



Real size

## TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM TICK BITES DURING YOUR OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES:

- preferably walk on trails and avoid tall grass;
- use a DEET-based or icaridin-based mosquito repellent on the exposed parts of your body, avoiding your face;
- wear light-coloured long clothing, a hat and closed shoes;
- tuck your pant legs into your socks and your shirt into your pants.

## WHEN YOU RETURN FROM AN OUTDOOR ACTIVITY NEAR TALL GRASS OR IN A WOODED AREA:

- take a bath or a shower within 2 hours and carefully inspect your entire body and your children's bodies to check whether ticks are clinging to the skin, because they are difficult to see;
- carefully remove any tick that is still clinging to your skin as soon as possible (within 24 hours after the bite) to reduce the risk of bacterial transmission;
- also examine your pets, your clothing and your equipment (backpack, jacket, etc.) before entering the home. Wash the clothing and equipment or put them in the dryer as needed. Once indoors, a tick could bite a person or an animal.

## STEPS FOR REMOVING A TICK FROM THE SKIN

1. Grasp the tick with tweezers as close as possible to the skin. It is important not to squeeze the tick's abdomen.
2. Pull the tick gently and continuously, without turning it or crushing it. If you can't remove the tick's head, leave it in place; the skin will heal.
3. Clean your skin with soap and water and wash your hands thoroughly.
4. Keep the tick in a tightly sealed container. Record the date and the place you were when you were bitten and the location of the bite on your body. This information could be used to watch the evolution of Lyme disease in Québec.



**If you were bitten in the Estrie (Eastern Townships),  
Montérégie or Outaouais regions, call Info-Santé 8-1-1:**  
an antibiotic could be recommended to you as  
a preventive measure.

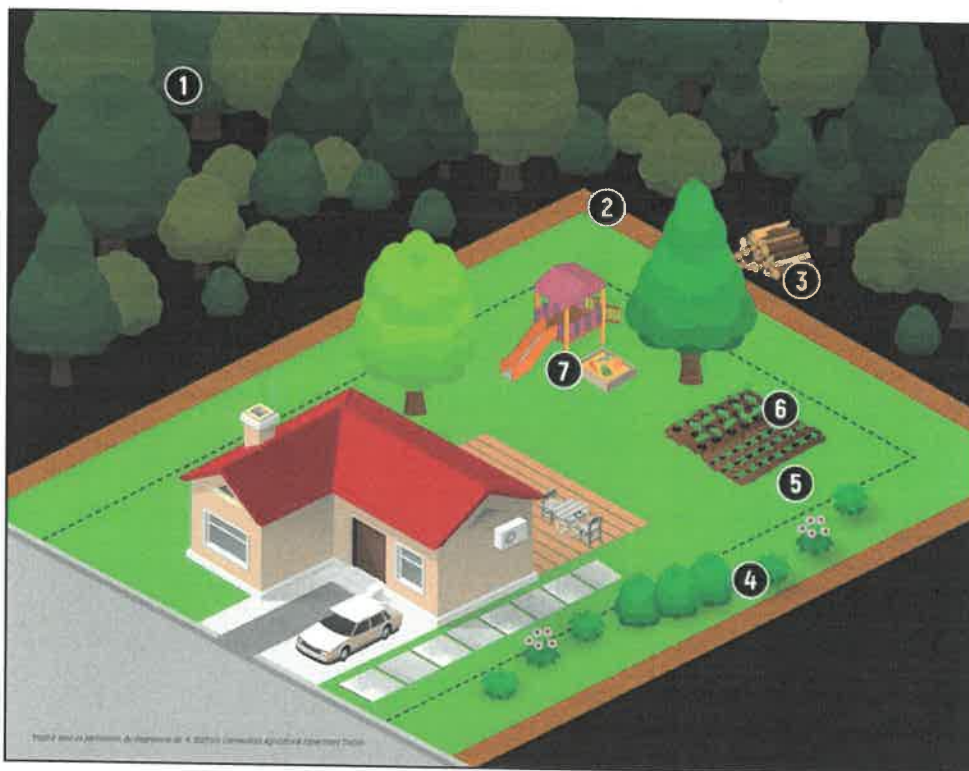
If you have Lyme disease symptoms within 30 days after  
you were bitten, call **Info-Santé 8-1-1** or consult a doctor  
and bring the tick to your appointment.

**To find out about the symptoms of Lyme  
disease, the regions at risk or to receive other  
advice, go to**

**[sante.gouv.qc.ca/lyme](http://sante.gouv.qc.ca/lyme)**



## Modifying Your Landscape to Reduce Your Risk of Getting Lyme Disease



**Blacklegged ticks, or *Ixodes scapularis*, are vectors for Lyme disease in Québec. They are primarily found in heavily wooded areas and the overgrown areas between woods and open spaces. If you live in a tick-infested area, following are a few precautions you can take to reduce tick habitat near your home.**

- ❶ **TICK ZONE** Avoid areas with forest and brush where deer, rodents, and ticks are common.
- ❷ **WOOD CHIP BARRIER** Use a 3 ft. barrier of wood chips or rock to separate the « tick zone » and rocks walls from the lawn.
- ❸ **WOOD PILE** Keep wood piles outside the wood chip barrier, away from the home.
- ❹ **TICK MIGRATION ZONE** Maintain a 9 ft. barrier of lawn between the wood chips and areas such as patios, gardens, and play sets.
- ❺ **TICK SAFE ZONE** Enjoy daily living activities such as gardening and outdoor play inside this perimeter.
- ❻ & ❼ **GARDENS AND PLAY SETS** Keep play sets in the « tick safe zone » in areas where ticks have difficulty surviving.



Ticks are primarily found in heavily wooded areas and the overgrown areas between woods and open spaces. They hold onto plant stems and climb onto passing people or animals. Ticks do not jump and do not drop from trees. The presence of isolated trees in the yard is not a problem and protects from the sun.

There are fewer ticks in ornamental vegetation and grassy areas. In lawns, most ticks are found fewer than 3 metres from the outside edge of the lawn, particularly along woodlands and ornamental plantations.

#### ***Clear the boundary lines of your yard***

- Remove leaf litter, brush and weeds at the edge of the lawn, woodpiles and sheds.
- Trim tree branches and shrubs around the lawn edge to let in more sunlight.
- Create a 3-foot or wider wood chip, mulch, or gravel border between lawn and woods.
- Move children's swing sets and sandboxes away from the woodland's edge and place them on a woodchip or mulch foundation.
- Consider putting down patio stones, pavers or gravel or using container planting for the portions of your yard closest to the house and that your family uses most frequently.
- Keep the grass mowed.

#### ***Discourage rodent activity near your house***

- Clean up and seal stone and cement walls and small openings around the home. Move firewood piles and birdfeeders away from the house.

Spraying pesticides or acaricides is not appropriate

Sources: Public Health Agency Canada [<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/id-mi/lyme-fs-fra.php#s11>] and K.C. Stafford III. Tick Management Handbook. Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, 2007 [<http://www.ct.gov/caes/site/default.asp>].

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