

Tick avoidance tips

The following recommendations will help protect you and your property from ticks that carry Lyme and other diseases, according to national tick expert Thomas Mather, director of the Center for Vector-Borne Disease and the Tick Encounter Resource Center at the University of Rhode Island. For more information, visit the Center's website at www.tickencounter.org. (*Note to Editors: This website will be launched in March.*)

1. Conduct a daily tick check of your entire body and promptly remove any ticks found. Deer ticks must be attached and actively feeding for 24 hours to transmit Lyme and other diseases. Because deer ticks are tiny, use a sharp pair of tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible.
2. Apply a tick repellent containing Permethrin to your clothing whenever going outdoors. Permethrin-based repellents should NOT be used on the skin.
3. Protect your pets from ticks by using repellents like Frontline and Advanticks. Pet owners are often exposed to ticks via their pets.
4. Control tick populations in your yard and make it less hospitable to ticks by:
 - removing thick leaf litter;
 - having a professional application of pesticides around the perimeter of your property twice a year (May and June); and
 - using a product like Damminix or Maxforce that treats mice and chipmunks in your yard with insecticide, since these animals are primarily responsible for infecting ticks with disease.

The peak risk period for contracting Lyme disease is during the months of May, June and July when the nymphal stage of deer ticks are most active. Lyme disease risk is most acute in Atlantic coastal states from Maine to North Carolina, in the Great Lakes region, and in coastal northern California.

###

Contact: Todd McLeish
URI News Bureau
401-874-7892
tmcleish@urui.edu