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**Printable Tick Bite Prevention and Removal Recommendations**

**One bite can change a life! Ticks are capable of transmitting multiple pathogens that can cause more than one illness in just a single bite.** Your risk of contact with ticks and exposure to multiple diseases, including Lyme, varies regionally throughout the United States and the world. Practice tick safety year-round, especially in more mild or temperate climates.

We encourage enjoyment of the Colorado outdoors and beyond, but we urge you to increase awareness and to take precautions to keep you, your children, and your pets healthy. Whether you live, work or recreate within Colorado or elsewhere, the BEST way to deal with the problem of tick-borne diseases is to prevent tick-bites!

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TICK BITE PREVENTION\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

* Wearing Permethrin treated clothing is the most effective means of deterring ticks. Permethrin is an insecticide that can be safely applied to clothing or gear. **It should never be applied to skin!**
* Use repellents (chemical or natural) that are labeled for ticks. Follow the directions on the label carefully!
* Wear light colored clothing (long sleeved pants and shirts) so that it is easier to spot ticks. Tuck pants into socks and shirt into pants, wear hats and place long hair in braids to minimize access to skin for ticks.
* Stay on the center of hiking trails. Ticks can sense both body heat and Co2 and often quest in areas of high human or wildlife traffic. Avoid walking through high grass and bushy areas and sitting on logs or against trees. Use a blanket or tarp to avoid sitting directly on the ground when resting or picnicking.
* **CONDUCT TICK CHECKS!** Check yourself, your children and your pets for ticks frequently while participating in outdoor activities and daily after spending time outdoors. Some ticks that transmit disease are as tiny as a poppy seed. Check carefully along the hairline, nape of neck, inside and behind the ears, armpits, and groin area, behind the knees, inside belly button and between your toes.
* Check your gear and clothing prior to getting into a vehicle or entering your home.
* Place outdoor exposed clothing directly into dryer on high heat for 20 minutes to kill ticks that may be clinging to the fabric.
* Shower as soon as you come inside if you have been in tick habitat.
* Avoid sleeping with your pets. They may transport ticks onto your bed, increasing your chance of a tick bite.
* Control small mammal populations in and around your home. These animals can act as reservoir hosts and may increase your exposure to ticks.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROPER TICK REMOVAL\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Even if all prevention measures have been taken, you may still be bitten. Though not every tick carries infection, the sooner a tick is removed the less chance of disease transmission**. Some diseases can be transmitted in just minutes others may take hours or days.**

* Avoid touching the tick with bare hands. Rubber gloves are recommended for removal.
* **Use fine-tipped tweezers and firmly grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible.** A tick tool that does not twist the tick may also be an effective method especially for very small ticks.
* **With a steady motion, pull straight up**until all parts of the tick are removed. **DO NOT** twist, crush or jerk the tick as this may agitate the tick and increase the chance of disease transmission.
* Place tick in a small airtight container or Ziploc bag with a few blades of green grass or slightly moist cotton ball if you wish to save tick for testing.
* Thoroughly wash your hands and the bite area with soap and water or an alcohol based hand sanitizer. Sanitize your tweezers or tick tool as well!
* Clean the tick bite with an antiseptic such as iodine or rubbing alcohol to avoid bite site infections.
* It is recommended that you consult with your physician regarding concerns or questions about your exposure, testing and potential treatment.

**NEVER use petroleum jelly, hot match, nail polish or other topical products to remove a tick!**These methods are not effective and may increase chance of disease transmission.

**If you find a tick that has not embedded (you have found it crawling on clothing, gear or pets) and you wish to dispose of it without testing, place the tick between adhesive tape and throw it in trash. Wash hands thoroughly!**