**Check for Ticks**

Dr. Strang, the Chief Medical Officer of Health recommends anyone who works or plays outdoors should check for ticks and make the tick check a part of your daily routine just like barn chores, crop checks, and livestock checks on the farm.

Left: Blacklegged Tick, Groundhog tick and Dog tick (Picture from: <https://www.nshealth.ca/news/tick-checks-necessary-addition-your-summer-do-list>

According to Kelly Cunningham, recreation coordinator with the Town of Lunenburg, the majority of Nova Scotia has ticks. In 2017, Cunningham, spent four months working on her practicum with the Public Healths’ health protection team in Bridgewater where it focused on Lyme disease and noted that all Nova Scotian’s need to learn how to prevent Lyme disease.

247 cases of Lyme disease were reported in Nova Scotia in 2015, and 326 cases in 2016. There is still more work to do to educate Nova Scotian’s on how to prevent infection, how to recognize Lyme disease carrying ticks, how to remove a tick, and recognize signs and symptoms of Lyme disease.

**Prevention:**

Apply insect repellent with DEET before working or playing outdoors, cover up exposed skin with light colored clothing, wear long sleeve shirts with cuffs and long pant legs that can be tucked into socks. Avoid wooded and grassy areas when playing outdoors.

**How to remove a Tick:**

If the tick hasn’t attached itself onto the skin brush it off the skin.

If the tick has begun to bite:

1. Use tweezers to grasp the tick by the head as close to the skin as possible.
2. Pull upward without twisting until the tick releases its hold. If you cannot remove the tick or if its mouthparts stay in the skin, the person should seek medical attention.
3. Once the tick is removed, wash the area with clean water. Put the tick in a sealable bag or empty pill bottle, and take it with you to the doctor. Ticks can be tested for Lyme disease.
4. If the area becomes infected or the person develops a fever or rash, the person should seek medical attention.

**Check for Ticks:**

Check yourself, your partner, kids, and pets when coming indoors from playing or working in wooded or grassy areas. Check your clothes and your skin. Ticks can get into the smallest crevices of the body so be sure to check your belly button, between toes, and ears. They can also hide in your hair or attach to your scalp. Also check your waist, groin, back of knees, neck, and arm pit areas. If possible, take a shower within a couple of hours of coming inside as it is easier to wash away ticks that may not have attached to your body yet.

**Recognizing Lyme Disease Carrying Ticks:**

See the photo at the beginning of this article to compare the different ticks found in Nova Scotia. The blacklegged tick is also known as the deer tick. Blacklegged ticks are smaller than dog ticks. There are no specific markings on the large part of their body. Dog ticks usually have white marks or silver spots on their body. Even though it is called the blacklegged tick, they don’t always have black legs. Blacklegged ticks in the nymphal stage and adult female blacklegged ticks can transmit Lyme disease. Compared to the adult blacklegged ticks, the nymphal tick is very small (1 to 3 mm).

**Signs & Symptoms of Lyme Disease:**

There are early and later signs of Lyme disease. Early signs and symptoms of Lyme disease can include a bull’s eye like rash near the tick bite that can show up between 7 and 10 days after the bite. Later symptoms can include flu-like symptoms, such as fever, headaches, tiredness, stiff neck, pain and swelling in the joints, and aches and pains all over your body, and memory loss.

For more information about tick safety and protecting yourself and your family whenever you enjoy the outdoors, including info on how to safely remove a tick, visit [novascotia.ca/ticksafety](https://novascotia.ca/ticksafety/).

Reference:

<https://www.nshealth.ca/news/tick-checks-necessary-addition-your-summer-do-list>

<https://www.nshealth.ca/sites/nshealth.ca/files/patientinformation/06037.pdf>

**Check for Ticks – DISCUSSION RECORD**

**Agenda:**

* Discuss what activities on farm could result in exposure to ticks.
* Review how to check for ticks.
* Does the farm supply spray with DEET?
* Practice the process of tick removal.

Comments or safety concerns as a result of the discussion or observed since the last rally?

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Follow-up to concerns raised at previous rally?
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Action Items?
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Near Miss/Incidents/Unsafe Acts/Conditions to Report?

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Topics recommended for future Rallies: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank the rally members for their participation.**

**Quiz Answers:** 1. T, 2. T, 3. d, 4.a

**TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE**

1. A tick check should be a part of your daily routine just like barn chores, crop checks, and livestock checks on the farm.  True or False

2. There is still more work to do to educate Nova Scotian’s on how to prevent infection, how to recognize Lyme disease carrying ticks, how to remove a tick, and recognize signs and symptoms of Lyme disease.True or False

3. Which of the following are tick prevention:

1. Wear insect repellent with DEET
2. Tuck in cuffs of pants and shirts
3. Wear light colored clothing
4. All of the Above

4. Early signs and symptoms of Lyme disease can include a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ near the tick bite that can show up between 7 and 10 days after the bite.

1. Bull’s eye rash
2. Bruise
3. Purple Streaks

**What would you do?**

You worked a long day in the field and at the edge of the property lines near the woods. You have been wearing long pants and shirt all day, do you really need to do a tick check?

**Attendance RECORD**

\*This is to acknowledge that I understand and agree to actively participate in the safety meeting.

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