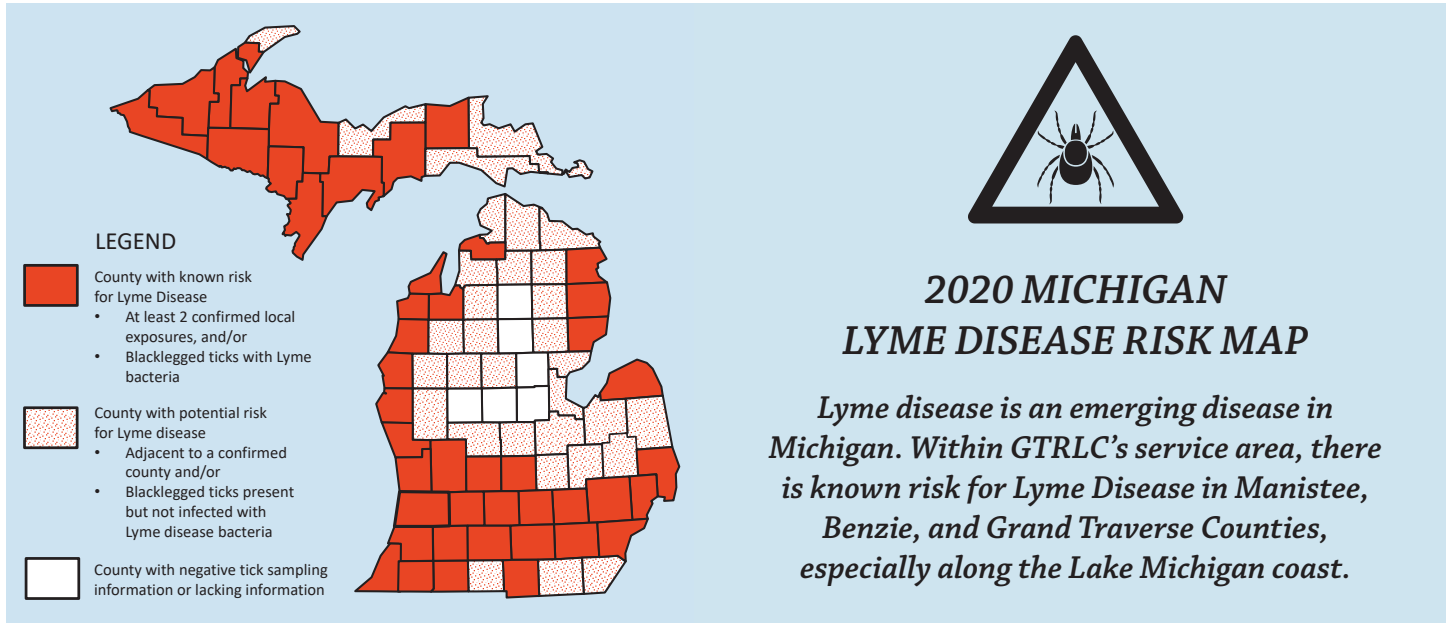


Ticks & Lyme Disease



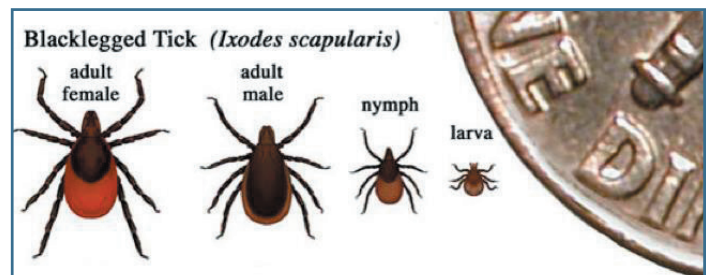
HOW TICKS SPREAD LYME DISEASE

Lyme disease is caused by the bacteria *Borrelia burgdorferi* and is transmitted to humans through the bite of the blacklegged (deer) tick.

Ticks suck blood from animals like mice, squirrels, birds, and deer. They are infected with Lyme by feeding on an infected animal then pass it along to the next animal or person they bite.

Ticks search for host animals from the leaf litter on the forest floor or from the tips of grasses and shrubs. Ticks crawl onto animals or people as they brush against them; ticks cannot jump or fly. They are active spring-fall, primarily May-August.

Experts disagree about how long it takes a tick to transmit Lyme disease, but a good rule of thumb is to find and remove any tick as soon as possible.



SYMPTOMS OF LYME DISEASE

Whether or not you find a tick, stay alert. A bull's-eye rash is an indication of Lyme, though not everyone infected gets one. You may also develop flu-like symptoms—fever, headache, nausea—or joint pain or dizziness. If left untreated, infection can spread to the joints, heart, and nervous system. Most cases can be treated with antibiotics.

HELPFUL REFERENCES:
www.michigan.gov/lyme

www.tickcounter.org
www.cdc.gov/lyme

www.lymedisease.org
www.mlda.org

PROTECTING YOURSELF

Your best defense against tick-borne illness is to avoid contact with ticks in the first place. Your next best defense is to quickly find and remove any ticks that latch on to you.

DRESS DEFENSIVELY

Wear shoes, socks, long pants, and long sleeves. Tuck pants into tall socks, tie back long hair and wear a hat. Light-colored clothing helps you spot ticks.

USE INSECT REPELLENTS

On Exposed Skin: EPA approved repellents registered for ticks include DEET, picaridin, or lemon oil eucalyptus.

On Clothing: Permethrin kills ticks on contact. Purchase pre-treated clothing (lasts up to 70 washings) or spray clothing and shoes yourself (protection lasts 5 to 6 washings.) Permethrin should NOT be applied directly to skin and should never be applied around cats, as it is highly toxic to them.

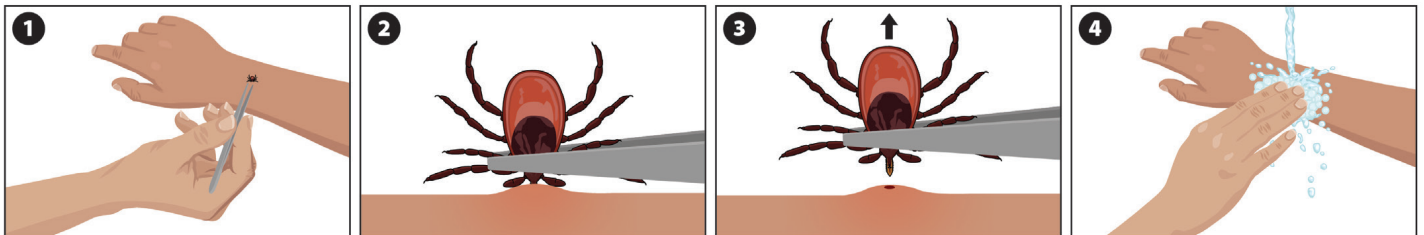
CHECK FOR TICKS

Periodically inspect your clothing and skin for ticks. Brush off those that aren't attached and remove any that are. Once home, take a shower right away to wash off unattached ticks and perform a "tick check" inspection. Pay careful attention to hidden places, including groin, armpits, back of knees, belly button and scalp. Running your clothes in a hot dryer for 10 minutes before you wash them will kill any ticks remaining.

TICK REMOVAL

Using fine-tipped tweezers or a tick removal tool, grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible. Pull backwards gently but firmly, using an even, steady pressure. After removing the tick, wash the skin and hands thoroughly with soap and water.

If you think a tick has been attached for 36 hours, consult your doctor to ask if an antibiotic is advised. Save the tick if you want to have it tested for Lyme Disease. If the tick is alive, place it in a container with a few pieces of fresh grass, or a small piece of paper towel moistened with a drop of water.



HELPFUL REFERENCES:
www.michigan.gov/lyme

www.tickencounter.org
www.cdc.gov/lyme

www.lymedisease.org
www.mlda.org