



HOW TO PROPERLY REMOVE A TICK

With a pair of fine point tweezers, grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible and pull outward with a slow, even force, pulling in the opposite direction to how the tick entered the skin.

- **DO NOT JERK OR TWIST THE TICK.** This might tear the head and mouth parts from the tick's body and will encourage the ticks fluid to enter your blood stream or skin.
- **DO NOT USE THE FINGERS TO REMOVE THE TICK.** Squeezing the tick could cause it to disgorge the contents of its body into the wound. You can contract Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever simply by handling ticks and having their excretions absorb through your skin.
- **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO REMOVE THE TICK WITH CHEMICALS (such as nail polish remover, soap, kerosene, oils, etc) OR BY HEATING THE TICKS WITH A MATCH.** This can kill it before it disengages its mouthparts. It can also cause the tick to regurgitate into the wound, increasing the likelihood of transmitting diseases.
- **WASH THE ATTACHMENT SITE.** Use warm soapy water and rubbing alcohol. You can apply an ointment like Neosporin to help protect the open site from contamination.
- **SAVE THE TICK.** If you want to send it for testing- place it in a small sealed ziplock bag with a very slightly damp cotton ball (not wet). Keep it in the refrigerator until you are ready to ship it. Remember- testing a tick does not guarantee the organisms will be detected. NEVER wait for the results to come back before being treated.
- **DO NOT WAIT.** Do NOT wait for a rash to appear (less than 50% of people bitten in Maryland report a rash and less than 10% of children nationwide have a rash). Do NOT wait for the disease to spread and cause symptoms. In a highly endemic area such as Maryland, the International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society (ILADS) recommends treating the bite as soon as possible. (See recommendations below) The one dose of Doxy theory- which some health care professionals in Maryland may try to pass off as curative- has not shown to be effective in a number of cases. Use common sense- one dose of antibiotics will not kill an infectious disease that can spread throughout your body in a manner of hours.
- **TAKE TICK WITH YOU TO DOCTORS.** Some medical professionals will insist on seeing the tick. You need to know that it doesn't matter what kind of tick bit you, especially in a highly endemic area like Maryland, they can all carry diseases. For example, Lyme disease isn't only found in deer ticks and RMSF isn't just in lone star ticks as some may try to tell you.