

TICKS TAKING OVER?

Take Back Your Yard



DID YOU KNOW?

There are many types of ticks in New York City, but only some spread disease.

The blacklegged tick, also known as a deer tick, is about the size of a poppy or sesame seed. They are found throughout Staten Island and parts of the Bronx, and can spread diseases such as Lyme disease, babesiosis and anaplasmosis.

Blacklegged ticks feed on field mice, which carry the germs that cause disease. Ticks also feed on deer which don't carry the germs, but can move ticks from one place to another. Areas with more deer usually have more blacklegged ticks.

Learn how to reduce your contact with ticks and tick-borne diseases in this brochure.



CREATE A TICK-SAFE ZONE IN YOUR YARD

Ticks are found in cooler areas where trees, brush, leaf litter and tall grasses provide cover and shade from the sun. Ticks avoid heat and direct sunlight.

Use landscaping to make your yard less attractive to ticks:

Keep playground equipment and outdoor furniture in a sunny location, away from yard edges and trees.

Plant shrubs and other plants that deer don't like, such as ferns and plants with strong scents. Visit nyc.gov/wildlifeny to learn more.

Trim shrubs and tree branches around your yard to let in more light.

Don't leave out food that attracts deer and other wildlife.

Place birdfeeders outside your tick-safe zone.

Create a barrier to define a tick-safe zone around your yard.

Keep grass short and don't let piles of brush or leaves build up.



Other ways to create a tick-safe zone in your yard:

- **A. If you have a wood pile**, stack logs neatly in a dry area away from your home to keep rodents away.
- **B. Install a 5 foot fence** to keep deer and wildlife out of your yard.
- **C. Use gravel or wood chips** to create a 3 foot wide barrier around lawns, patios and play equipment.
- **D. Rodent bait boxes** apply a tick-killing **pesticide** (also known as an **acaricide**) on mice when they enter the box to feed. The boxes are sealed and child resistant but are only available through licensed pest management professionals.
- **E. Tick control tubes** are cardboard tubes filled with cotton balls treated with the pesticide permethrin. If mice use the cotton balls for their nests, the permethrin kills ticks on the mice. **Thermacell Tick Tubes** and **Damminix Tick Control Tubes** are examples of tick control tubes you can buy.



A



B



C



D



E

MANAGING TICKS

Reduce Ticks in Your Yard

Another good way to reduce the amount of ticks in your yard is to use tick-killing products, or **pesticides**. For best results, hire a pest management professional who uses products approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and is registered with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). EPA approved pesticides such as bifenthrin, permethrin, and Met52 (which is made from a naturally occurring fungus) only need to be applied **two to three times a year** and only on the edges of your yard. Used properly, these products can be safer for the environment than organic and plant-based options. Studies show most organic and plant-based products are less effective and may require repeated applications.

Quick Tips:

- Pesticides should not be the only method used to reduce ticks. Use the landscaping tips and personal protective measures, too.
- Use in mid-May and mid-June to reduce young ticks, and again in mid-October for adult ticks.
- Target the edges of your yard and shady, leaf-covered areas.
- Pesticides can be sold as a liquid or in granules (small pieces.) To find product specific information, visit dec.ny.gov/nyspad.

Hire a Pest Management Professional

In New York City, hiring a pest control company is another effective way to control ticks in your yard.

DEC requires that pesticide applicators be certified, and businesses be registered with the DEC.

Look for DEC registered businesses that use an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan and certified applicators. To check if companies meet these guidelines, call **718-482-4994** or visit dec.ny.gov/nyspad. (Search for those certified in Ornamental or Turf).

Note: The IPM plan should target moist, shady areas to reduce blacklegged ticks. To also target Asian longhorned ticks or lone star ticks, the plan might also include treating open, sun exposed areas.



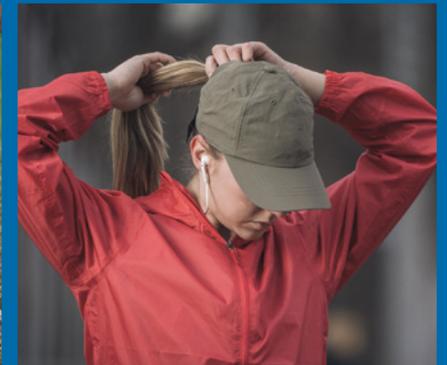
In general, adult blacklegged ticks are about the size of a sesame seed and nymphal ticks are about the size of a poppy seed. This picture shows a larva, nymph, adult male and adult female from left to right.

Image used with permission from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

PERSONAL TICK PREVENTION

While tick control in your yard can help reduce the number of ticks, it is hard to completely remove them. If you have a yard where ticks may be present, you should do the following to reduce your risk of tick bites:

- Check yourself, children, and pets for ticks after being outside.
- Remove attached ticks with pointed-tip tweezers. To remove a tick, grasp close to the skin and pull straight out.
- Use insect repellent with DEET, picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus extract (also known as PMD).
- When working in the yard or mowing the lawn, be sure to:
 - Wear light colored clothing so you can see any ticks.
 - Treat clothing with permethrin.
 - Wear long pants and closed toe shoes, and tuck pant legs into your socks.
 - Tie up your hair, wear a hat or both.
 - Wear gloves while gardening.



For more information on how to prevent tick bites, visit nyc.gov/health/ticks.

Disclaimer: Mention of a commercial product in this booklet is for informational purposes only and is not an endorsement of the product by the New York City Health Department.

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