

- Areas with ticks, fleas and heartworm mostly overlap so a good option is to treat your pet with multi-purpose, preventive medications. It's important to dose these products according to weight.

- No product is 100 per cent effective so owners who use them on their dogs should still expect to find some ticks.

- Certain tick control products for dogs can be deadly to cats. Check with your veterinarian about the safety of their use if your household includes dogs and cats. Tick products for dogs must never be used on cats.

- Be aware of dense tick environments and avoid spending time near them.

- Strategic landscaping in your yard can prevent ticks from living on your property.

Here are some tips:

- keep grass short

- remove leaves and branches around the yard

- keep wood piles and bird feeders away from the house

- use wood, tile, concrete or wood chips in high traffic areas of the yard

- reduce rodent activity on your property

- if you live on an acreage or farm, discourage deer from coming near your home by building fences around food sources or planting your garden away from your house

Checking for ticks on pets

After spending time outdoors, take a few minutes to check for ticks on your pet. You can often find ticks crawling along your pet's skin or fur. Look and feel all over your

pet, but ticks will generally migrate towards warm, dark areas such as armpits, the groin area, ears, feet (in between the toe pads on the paw) or near the anus (under the tail).

Removing ticks from pets

It is the same as removing them from a human. Do not panic! If you are comfortable removing the tick from your pet at home, you can do so. If not, consult your veterinarian for assistance. Here are the steps for removing a tick:

- Get a pair of clean tweezers.

- Wear gloves (if possible) since ticks do carry diseases.

- Separate the fur around the tick as best as possible.

- Grab the head of the tick (the part that is attached to the skin) as close to the skin as possible but be careful not to pinch your pet!

- With even pressure, pull upwards with the tweezers. Avoid twisting or bending since some parts of the tick could be left in the skin. You do not want to pull off the body and leave the head embedded in the skin, as it may cause an infection.

- Place the tick in a small container of isopropyl alcohol. This will kill the tick and also allow you to keep the evidence. If your pet develops symptoms in the days after a tick bite, your veterinarian may find it extremely helpful to know the species of tick and have access to the actual parasite for testing.

- Clean the tick bite area with isopropyl alcohol or soap and water.

- Give your pet a treat – a reward for being calm and patient.

WORRIED ABOUT TICKS? DON'T BE!

Take precautions against getting bit by ticks:

- Wear light coloured clothing; long pants, long sleeved shirts, socks and hats. This makes it easier to spot the ticks.

- Tuck pants into socks (because it looks cool)

- Use insect repellent containing DEET on exposed skin. If you are sensitive to chemicals you can make a non-chemical version by combining 5-10 drops of the following: tea tree oil, lemon grass oil and lavender oil in 250ml of water with a little alcohol mixed in it. Shake well before use.

- You may come in contact with ticks during outdoor activities around your home or when walking through leaf litter or near shrubs.

- When hiking, **STAY ON THE PATH** and avoid contact with overgrown bush.

What is a tick?



Ticks are arachnids: they have eight legs with separate head and body sections — just like spiders and scorpions. There are over 900 species of ticks worldwide, so it's not surprising that they come in varying shapes, sizes and colours. Ticks can be red, brown, black or tan, and some species of ticks can

be very small and hard to see. Most ticks are protected by a very hard shell which makes them resilient and difficult to kill.

Ticks live in moist and humid environments particularly in tall grass, trees and shrubs. Ticks latch onto their host looking for a warm, hairy place to survive by eating blood. As they eat, their bodies grow and become engorged. Once they are full they drop to the ground to lay its eggs. In North America, deer, moose, elk, dogs, rodents and birds are major carriers of ticks, so areas with large populations of these species are suggested key environments for ticks.

Ticks and diseases

It's true that ticks can carry one or more diseases, but it's fairly rare that you or your pet will contract a tick-borne disease.

Although Lyme disease is in the spotlight right now, wood ticks (also called dog ticks) - which are a common species in Saskatchewan - do not carry the disease-causing bacteria. Blacklegged ticks (formerly called deer ticks) are the ones responsible for carrying and transmitting Lyme disease, but they do not normally cycle in Saskatchewan.

People should be aware of ticks if they are traveling to a Lyme-endemic part of Canada including parts of southern Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and the Atlantic Provinces or the U.S.

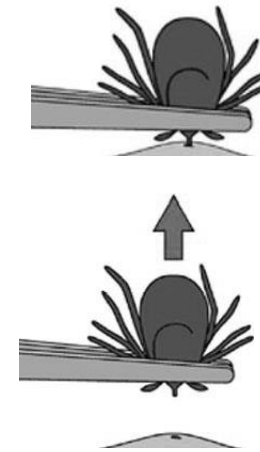
Checking for ticks on humans

After spending time outdoors, take a few minutes to check for ticks on yourself. Perform a complete body inspection after being in an area where ticks may live. Check for ticks on or under clothing. Be sure to check your armpits, in and around your scalp and hair, navel, groin, and behind your ears and knees.

Removing ticks on humans

Do not apply mineral oil, Vaseline or anything else to remove the tick as this may cause it to inject germs into the wound. Do not panic! If you are comfortable removing the tick, you can do so. If not, consult a medical health professional your for assistance. Here are the steps for removing a tick:

- Get a pair of clean tweezers.
- Wear gloves (if possible) since ticks do carry diseases.
- If on the scalp separate the hair around the tick as best as possible.
- Grab the head of the tick (the part that is attached to the skin) as close to the skin as possible but be careful not to catch the skin.
- With even pressure, pull upwards with the tweezers. Avoid twisting or bending since some parts of the tick could be left in the skin. You do not want to pull off the body and leave the head embedded in the skin, as it may cause an infection.



- Be careful not to squeeze, crush or puncture the body of the tick, which may contain infectious fluids.
- Place the tick in a small container of isopropyl alcohol. This will kill the tick.
- Clean the tick bite area with isopropyl alcohol or soap and water.
- If you develop a rash or fever within several weeks of removing a tick, see your doctor. Be sure to tell the doctor about your recent tick bite, when the bite occurred, and where you most likely acquired the tick.

Ticks and Pets

Tall grass and bush are places where ticks like to hang out, so if your dog visits this type of environment, they can pick up ticks.

Preventing ticks on Pets

See your local veterinarian. Several “spot-on” medications that repel or kill ticks after they bite are available to control ticks in companion animals. Here are some more suggestions: