



Protect Your Family from Illness this Summer

Summer is a wonderful time to enjoy the great outdoors in Rhode Island, but there are also some health risks associated with the season. The Rhode Island Department of Health offers this information to make families aware of potential dangers and health risks, and inform them about how to take proper precautions to prevent disease.

Tick-borne Diseases (Anaplasmosis, Ehrlichiosis, Babesiosis, Lyme Disease, Powassan)



Ticks that carry Lyme disease and other tickborne illnesses can be found in parks,

playgrounds, and backyards, but they are most common in very grassy areas and the woods. These ticks are hard to see because they can be as small as a poppy seed!

Prevent tick-borne diseases by following these four simple steps:

Avoid Direct Contact with Ticks

- Avoid wooded and brushy areas with high grass and leaf litter.
- Walk in the center of trails.
- Wear long pants and long sleeves whenever possible.
- Tuck your pants into your socks so ticks don't crawl under your clothes.
- Wear light colored clothing so you can see the ticks more easily.

Repel Ticks

- When outdoors, use repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, some oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol. Follow the directions on the package.
- Use products that contain [permethrin](#) on shoes and clothing.

Check for Ticks

- Bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors (preferably within 2 hours) to wash off and more easily find ticks that are crawling on you.
- Conduct a full-body tick check using a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body upon return from tick-infested areas.
- Examine gear and pets. Ticks can ride into the home on clothing and pets, then attach to a person later, so carefully examine pets, coats, and day packs.

Remove Ticks from Your Body

([click here](#) to see where to check for ticks)

- To remove an attached tick, grasp with tweezers as close as possible to the attachment (skin) site, and pull upward and out with a firm and steady pressure.
- If tweezers are not available, use fingers shielded with tissue paper or rubber gloves.

To learn more, see [RIDOH's tick-borne diseases page](#) or the [University of Rhode Island Tick Encounter Resource Center](#).

Mosquito-borne Illnesses (Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE), West Nile Virus, Zika)

Protect yourself against mosquito-borne illnesses by using bug spray with DEET, avoiding mosquito breeding grounds, and taking other preventive measures.

What You Should Do

- Put screens on windows and doors. Fix screens that have holes.
- Minimize outside activities at sunrise and sundown (when mosquitoes who carry WNV or EEE are most active).
- If you must be outside, wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants and use bug spray.
- Use repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, some oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol. Follow directions on the package.
- Put mosquito netting over playpens and baby carriages.

- Get rid of anything around your house and yard that



- collects water to prevent mosquito breeding.
- Remove any water from unused swimming pools, boats, or water features and cover them.
- Change the water in birdbaths at least two times a week.
- If you are traveling to an area with [Zika Virus](#), protect yourself from mosquito bites all day long because the species of mosquitoes that carry Zika Virus are active throughout the day, not just at dawn and dusk.
- To learn more, see [RIDOH's mosquito-borne diseases page](#).

Animal Bites and Rabies



Prevent [animal bites and rabies](#) by avoiding contact with wild animals such as skunks, foxes, raccoons, and bats, as

well as stray cats and dogs.

To Prevent Rabies

- Vaccinate pets.
- Wear gloves to tend to pets with wounds of unknown origin, or immediately after encounters that have occurred between the pet and either stray animals or wildlife.

- Cover garbage to prevent attracting animals to your property.
- Bat-proof your home.

What You Should Do

Rabies is a serious disease. It is very important to call your doctor right away if you have been bitten by an animal. If you have a bat in your home, call the animal control officer at the police department and the RI Department of Health at 401-222-2577 or 401-272-5952 after hours. To learn more, visit <http://health.ri.gov/diseases/rabies>.