

# Avoiding Tick Bites

Working outdoors particularly in southern Ontario in wooded bushy areas or tall grass can pose a risk of incurring a tick bite. Tick bites are often harmless, in which case they don't cause any noticeable symptoms. However, tick bites can cause allergic reactions and on rare occasions, spread diseases to humans and pets.

## AVOIDING TICK BITES

- Wear light-coloured clothing, it makes ticks easier to spot
- Wear closed footwear and socks and a long-sleeved shirt tucked into long pants. Tuck your pants into your socks
- Use a tick repellent that has DEET or icaridin on your clothes and exposed skin
- Search your clothes and body for ticks at least once a day, paying special attention to areas such as the groin, navel, armpits, and scalp and behind ears and knees. Use a mirror to check the back of your body or have someone else check for you
- Take a shower as soon as you can after being outdoors to more easily find and wash off any ticks
- Place outdoor clothing through the dryer cycle for 60 minutes on high heat before washing to kill any ticks that may be hard to see, as ticks thrive in wet environments

## WHAT IF I FIND A TICK?

- Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible
- Pull the tick out slowly with even pressure to ensure mouth parts are removed and body is not crushed
- Wash area with soap and warm water
- Put the tick into a container with a lid or a sealed plastic bag
- Bring the tick to your local health unit for identification

## DO NOT

- Grasp around bloated belly and squeeze the tick
- Use a match, heat or chemicals to try and remove it
- Twist the tick when pulling it out

## SYMPTOMS OF TICK BITES

Tick bites may produce no symptoms. However, if you're allergic to tick bites, you may experience:

- pain or swelling at the bite site
- a rash
- a burning sensation at the bite site
- blisters
- difficulty breathing, if severe

Be sure to seek medical attention if you start to experience symptoms related to a tick bite.