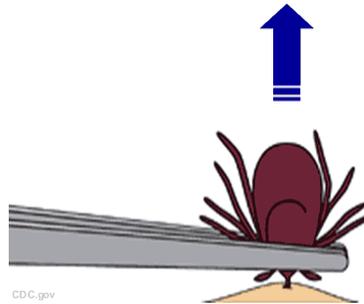


you covered. Even if you follow all the rules, you still could get bitten by a tick. You should check yourself for ticks every evening before you go to bed.

If you do have a tick, your mom or dad can remove it with a pair of tweezers. The best way to do it is to use the tweezers to grab the tick by its head and pull it out firmly and slowly. Try to be patient if your mom or dad is doing this. That tick is better out of you than in you!



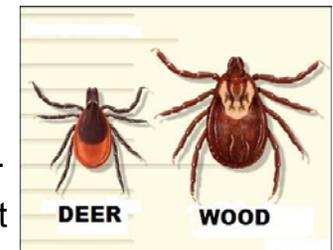
**For More Information Contact:**  
**Polk County Health Department**  
**100 Polk County Plaza, Suite 180**  
**Balsam Lake, WI 54810**  
**715-485-8500**  
[www.polkcountyhealthdept.org](http://www.polkcountyhealthdept.org)



# LYME DISEASE



In the spring and summer, you might hear about something called Lyme disease. It has nothing to do with limes, but it does have something to do with ticks - those creepy, tiny bugs that like to drink human blood. Disgusting!

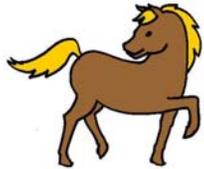


There are two types of ticks. The wood tick and the deer tick. The tiny deer tick is the one that can cause Lyme disease. Some of the deer ticks carry germs (bacteria). If the bacteria get in a person, they can cause the infection Lyme disease. The bacteria are called **spirochetes** (say: spy-ruh-keets). The best way to prevent Lyme disease is to prevent tick bites. Let's find out more



about this disease and how to keep those ticks away.

## Ticks Want to Suck Your Blood



Ticks feed on mice, dogs, horses, and sometimes people. They have eight



legs, but are so tiny, they may look like a

speck of dirt or the head of a pin. You're most likely to run into them in grassy or wooded areas. In spring and summer, you're more likely to have a lot of skin exposed (like when you're wearing shorts and a T-shirt), so it gives ticks a lot of opportunity to latch on to your skin.



You don't feel anything when the tick first bites you. You probably won't even know the tick is feeding. After an

infected tick bites you, it pumps water out of its mouth to lower its body weight (it's heavier from the blood it's just sucked out of you). Then the tick spits the spirochetes into you. If the tick has been there a while (more than a day), and if the tick has the Lyme bacteria, you might get Lyme disease.

## Feeling Sick With Symptoms

Your doctor is the person who can tell for sure if you have Lyme disease, but here are two common signs:

- feeling tired and achy all over, like you have the flu
- developing a bull's-eye rash



(a small dot that turns into a ring around a central red circle)



Sometimes, people don't have any signs that they are sick with Lyme disease. But they might develop swelling (puffiness) or pain in their knees or another joint a few months after the tick bite.

## Fight the Bite

Ticks hang out in wooded, grassy areas, so cover up if you'll be playing in those areas.



If you'll be walking through the woods, wear a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, knee-high socks, and a hat to cover your hair. If it's warm outside, you might not want to put on so many clothes. Ask your mom or dad to help you choose lightweight, cool clothes that will still keep