

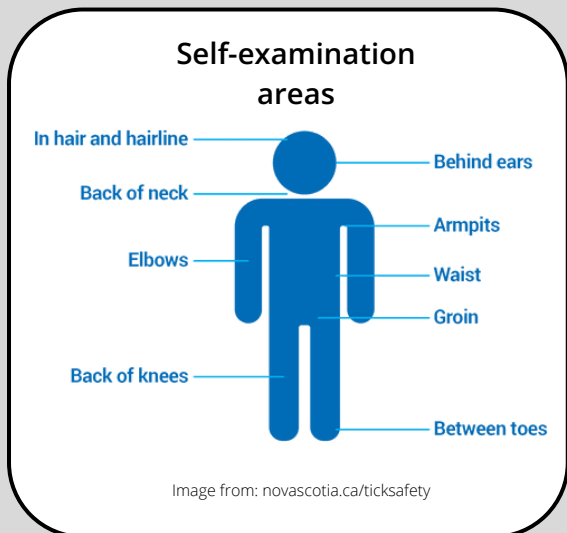
Ticks belong in the mountains, not on you.

Hunters' risk for ticks

- Rule of thumb: If there are deer, then there are ticks.¹
- Ticks are most often seen between the time snow melts through mid-July in Utah. Encounters then increase again in the fall before the snow arrives.²
- Ticks hide in the cool earth at the bases of shrubs and tall dry grasses. Ticks move from the ground up.¹
- When hunters collect antler sheds, sit to glass (watch for animals), or hike through vegetation they increase their risk for tick exposure.

Prevent ticks when you hunt

- Spray clothing and gear with an insect repellent containing at least 0.5% permethrin. This treatment option can last a few washes before it needs to be reapplied.³
- Put the hides and heads of harvested animals into either plastic garbage bags or game bags before you put them in your backpack.⁴
- Wear disposable gloves when you dress the animal.⁴
- Routinely examine exposed skin, shoes, hems of pants, and backpacks for any ticks.³
- Place all gear in either the dryer on high for 10 minutes or wash in hot water. Cold and warm water washes will not kill ticks.³
- Shower within 2 hours of arriving home to wash ticks away and perform a full body examination.³

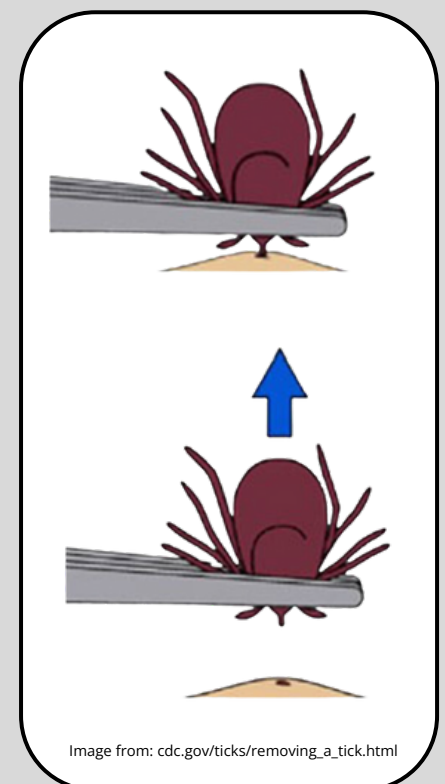


How to remove a tick

If a tick has attached itself to your body, stay calm. It can be removed.

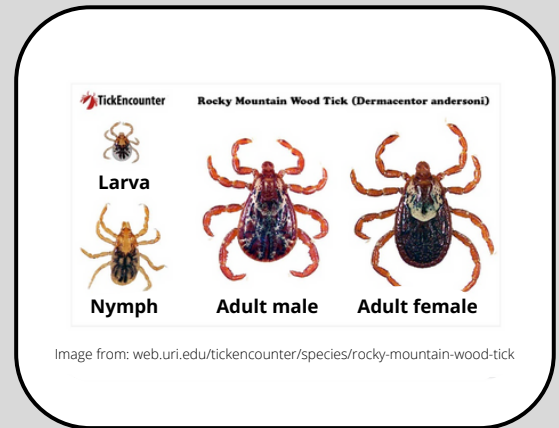
- When ticks attach themselves to a host they secrete a cement-like substance, which glues their mouth to the host and makes removal harder. This is why it's important to not squeeze or crush the tick while it's attached since it might secrete more fluids.⁵
- Use a pair of fine pointed tweezers and grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible. Don't crush the tick with the tweezers.
- Pull directly up from the attachment site. Don't pull back sharply because that can cause the head to detach and stay embedded in the skin.
- If the head remains embedded, treat it similarly to a splinter and gently massage it out.

Never apply any substance such as petroleum jelly, lip balm, fingernail polish or remover, repellents, or pesticides to the tick. Do not hold a flame against the tick. These methods don't work and could agitate the tick and it to secrete more fluid into the blood.⁵



About ticks

- Ticks bite through the skin and attach themselves to the host.⁶
- There are 3 stages in a tick's life⁵
 - larva (often clustered in large groups)
 - nymph
 - adult
- Utah's most common tick is the Rocky Mountain Wood tick. This tick can transmit Colorado Tick Fever.⁷
- Other tick species found in Utah are
 - western blacklegged tick
 - brown dog tick
 - winter tick⁷
- The only human-attaching tick capable of transmitting Lyme disease in Utah is the western blacklegged tick, and the likelihood you will encounter one is very low.²
- To protect yourself against tickborne illnesses, always conduct a thorough tick check after you have been in tick habitat.²



Conclusion

Ticks are present in Utah and can transmit diseases to humans. Knowing and using prevention and removal techniques will go a long way toward keeping you and others safe from the harmful diseases associated with ticks. If you find a tick in Utah, visit epi.utah.gov/tickborne-diseases/ or scan the QR code to learn more about them and how to submit your findings.



References

1. Roberts, K., (2023). How to keep ticks from biting. *Consumer Reports on Health*, 35(4), 4.
2. Richardson, K., Davis, R., & Ramirez, R. (2023). *Ticks and tickborne diseases of Utah*. Utah State University. <https://extension.usu.edu/pests/research/ticks-and-tickborne-diseases-of-utah>
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, July 1). Preventing tick bites. https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/avoid/on_people.html
4. Utah Division of Utah Wildlife Resources. (2023, October 20). Chronic wasting disease. <https://wildlife.utah.gov/chronic-wasting-disease.html>
5. U.S. Army Public Health Center. (n.d.). How to check yourself for ticks and how to remove an attached tick. https://ph.health.mil/PHC%20Resource%20Library/HowtoCheckforTicksandRemoval_FS_18-092-0919.pdf
6. Centers for Disease control and Prevention. (2020, September 21). *How ticks spread disease*. https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/life_cycle_and_hosts.html
7. Utah Department of Health and Human Services. (2022). Tick surveillance annual report. https://epi.utah.gov/wp-content/uploads/DHHS_TickSurveillanceReport_FINAL.pdf