



Franklin Regional Council of Governments

Franklin County Cooperative Public Health Service

BLACKLEGGED OR "DEER" TICKS



MALE

FEMALE

NYMPH

AMERICAN DOG TICKS



MALE

FEMALE

LONE STAR TICKS



MALE

FEMALE

NYMPH

Deer Tick Activity is High in New England – Prevent Bites!

Massachusetts deer tick testing conducted by the UMASS Laboratory of Medical Zoology between January 1 and May 12, 2017 indicates 39% positive for the bacterium causing Lyme and 7% for Anaplasmosis and Babesiosis. Only deer ticks (also known as black-legged ticks) can transmit Lyme disease, usually requiring attachment for more than 24 hours to transmit. American dog ticks transmit much less common diseases but also should be avoided.

There's a lot you can do to prevent tick bites from occurring in the first place. Make a habit of checking yourself, your children and pets for ticks after coming inside. When in high-risk wooded brushy areas, wearing light colored clothing that covers skin with loose ends tucked in, using insect repellent containing DEET on exposed skin and wearing shoes and clothes treated with the insecticide permethrin (lasts through many washes) significantly reduces risk.

If you find a tick attached, grip with pointed tweezers as close to the skin as possible and pull straight out. Immediately after, wash the bite site and your hands with soap and water, rubbing alcohol, or other antiseptic scrub. Tick identification is an important first step to assess risk. If you can't identify tick type or might like to test the tick at some later date, save it (ziplock in freezer). Afterward, watch for the appearance of increased redness, any type of rash, fever or flu-like symptoms. Call your doctor if any of these occur.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health provides web and printed educational materials on tick-borne illnesses. The University of Rhode Island TickEncounter Resource Center website is also a good reference. For more information, contact Lisa White, RN, Regional Public Health Nurse with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments at 413-665-1400 x 114.