

Tailgate Safety Training for Landscaping and Horticultural Services

Agricultural Safety Program, 590 Woody Hayes Drive, Columbus, OH 43210

Tick Bites

Objective: Identify general tips to prevent and treat tick bites.

How to Use This Module

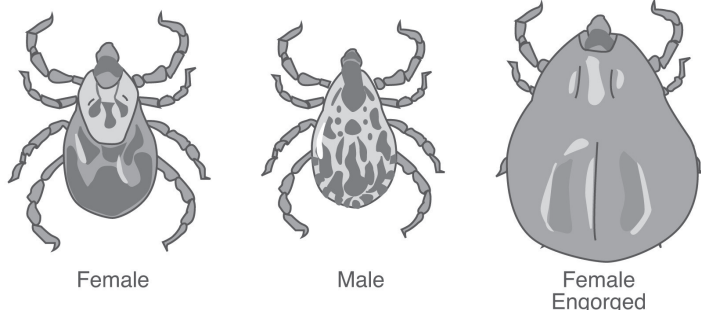
Ticks can be just pests, but they can also be dangerous. For this module:

- Read the information below on ticks, tick bites, and symptoms.
- Ask your supervisor and other workers to identify areas where they have found ticks.
- Review the important points.
- Take the True/False test to check your learning.

Background

Working in landscaping, forestry, or brush clearing can be risky because of exposure to ticks. The most frequently encountered ticks are the American dog tick and the ground hog tick. They can be found on various mammals including ground hogs, raccoons, dogs, and humans. Deer tick and western black-legged ticks are much smaller than common dog and cattle ticks.

When ticks feed on animals, they can acquire diseases including Lyme Disease and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. Then, ticks can pass the disease on to humans. Often, emergency help should be sought right away. Workers who are bitten should identify the tick to help doctors diagnose the trouble.



Female

Male

Female
Engorged

American Dog Ticks

Lyme Disease Symptoms	Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulls-eye rash <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Looks like a bulls-eye, with a reddish outer ring and a pale center ◆ Warm to the touch ◆ Usually more than two inches in diameter ◆ Occurs in 75 percent of those infected with Lyme disease. • Fever • Lymph node swelling • Neck stiffness • Generalized fatigue • Headaches • Migrating joint aches • Muscle aches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial symptoms may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Fever ◆ Nausea ◆ Vomiting ◆ Severe headache ◆ Muscle pain ◆ Lack of appetite • Later signs and symptoms include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Rash ◆ Abdominal pain ◆ Joint pain ◆ Diarrhea <p>The three classic symptoms are fever, rash, and history of tick bite.</p>

Preventing Tick Bites

- Stay out of brushy, overgrown grass, and wooded habitats, especially in spring and early summer.
- Remove leaves, tall grass, and brush from work areas. This will reduce tick, deer, and rodent habitat.
- Apply tick-toxic chemicals to work areas to help control the tick population.
- Wear light-colored clothing so ticks may be more easily seen and removed before attaching.
- Wear long-sleeve shirts. Tuck pant legs into socks or boots.
- Wear high boots or enclosed shoes that cover the entire foot.
- Wear a hat.
- Spray insect repellent on exposed skin, excluding the face.
- Shower and wash and dry clothes at a high temperature after outdoor exposure.
- Check your whole body for ticks, especially armpits, groin, and pubic areas.
- If a tick is found, remove it with tweezers and clean the area with an antiseptic.

Removing Ticks

A tick usually doesn't bite until it has been attached to your body for 24 hours. So, if a tick should become attached to you, remove it as soon as possible:

- Use tweezers to pull the tick straight away from the skin.
- Grasp the tick by the head with the tweezers.
- Do not twist or jerk ticks, as mouth parts may be left in the skin.
- Do not use a hot match or cigarette to remove a tick. This may cause the tick to burst.
- Avoid touching ticks with bare hands.
- After removing a tick, carefully disinfect the bite site. Wash hands with soap and water.

Review These Important Points

- Whenever bitten, try to identify the tick to help doctors diagnose the trouble.
- Lyme disease can cause a bulls-eye rash, which is greater than two inches in diameter.
- Remove leaves, tall grass, and brush from work areas. This will reduce tick, deer, and rodent habitat.

About These Modules

The author team for the training modules in the landscape and horticultural tailgate training series includes Dee Jepsen, Program Director, Agricultural Safety and Health, Ohio State University Extension; Michael Wonacott, Research Specialist, Vocational Education; Peter Ling, Greenhouse Specialist; and Thomas Bean, Agricultural Safety Specialist. Modules were developed with funding from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, Grant Number 46E3-HT09.

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Agriculture or the U.S. Department of Labor.

Answer Key: 1 = F, 2 = F, 3 = F, 4 = T, 5 = T.

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Tick Bites

Name _____

True or False?

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Deer ticks are the most common and frequently encountered. | T | F |
| 2. Twist or jerk ticks to remove them as soon as they are found. | T | F |
| 3. Use a hot match or cigarette to remove ticks. | T | F |
| 4. Wearing long pants and sleeves outdoors helps prevent Lyme disease. | T | F |
| 5. Shower and wash and dry clothes at a high temperature after outdoor exposure to prevent tick bites. | T | F |