

Spotlight On Safety

www.ehs.ucr.edu

INSECTS & LYME DISEASE



-Lyme disease is caused by bacteria transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected blacklegged tick. Symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue and a characteristic skin rash that has a bulls-eye appearance. Infection can spread to joints, the heart, and the nervous system if not treated.

-Ticks are six-legged insects about the size of a sesame seed. They are found close to the ground, especially in moist, shaded, and wooded areas, and on low plants in the edges of hiking trails.

-If you work outside during spring to midsummer, you risk being bitten by ticks and possibly contracting Lyme disease. Use the safety tips below to protect yourself from ticks.

Protect Yourself

- **Wear light colored clothing and long sleeved shirts and pants**
- **Use insecticides around ankles - 85% of the ticks found on clothing are found between the ankle region and the knee**
- **Tuck pant legs into socks**
- **Perform tick checks at least every night**
- **Apply a pesticide for ticks to your property in spring**

Remove Tick from Skin (as soon as you notice it)

- **Use fine-tipped tweezers to firmly grasp the tick as close to your skin as possible**
- **With a steady motion, pull the tick's body away from your skin**
- **Avoid crushing the tick's body**
- **If you accidentally crush the tick, clean your skin with soap and warm water or alcohol**
- **Do not be alarmed if the tick's mouthparts remain in the skin - once the mouthparts are removed from the rest of the tick, it can't transmit the Lyme disease bacteria**
- **Clean your skin with soap and warm water (check the bitten area for a month and go to the doctor if you get a rash)**
- **Do not use petroleum jelly, a hot match, nail polish, or other products to remove a tick**
- **Throw the dead tick away with your household trash**

For More Information

- **Lyme disease in California at www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7485.html**
- **Learn about Lyme Disease from the Centers for Disease Control at www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/lyme/index.htm**

Visit www.ehs.ucr.edu for additional information or call EH&S at 827-5528 if you have any questions.