LYME DISEASE

How to Remove a Tick

Don’t panic. Not all ticks are infected, and your risk of acquiring Lyme disease is greatly reduced if the tick is removed within the first 36 hours after attachment.

Remove the tick promptly and properly:

- Using tweezers, grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible.
- Gently pull the tick in a steady, upward motion.
- Wash the area with a disinfectant.
- When trying to remove the tick:
  - DO NOT touch the tick with your bare hands.
  - DO NOT squeeze the body of the tick as this may increase your risk of infection.
  - DO NOT put alcohol, nail polish remover or Vaseline on the tick.
  - DO NOT put a hot match or cigarette on the tick in an effort to make it “back out.”
  - DO NOT use your fingers to remove the tick.

These methods do not work and only increase the likelihood the tick will transmit Lyme disease to you. Applying alcohol, nail polish remover, or a hot match can irritate a tick and cause it to regurgitate its gut contents into your skin. The gut contents of a tick can contain the Lyme disease-causing bacterium.