Lyme disease is extremely common in Rhode Island. Rhode Island has the fourth-highest rate of Lyme disease in the country. Washington County has the highest rate of Lyme disease in the state; nearly twice the rate of Newport and Bristol counties.

Ticks can carry Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, ehrlichiosis, babesiosis, powassan and Rocky Mountain spotted fever (rare in Rhode Island).

Symptoms can start as soon as a few days after being bitten or as late as a few months after a tick bite. Some people may have no symptoms at all.

Early diagnosis is helpful in successfully treating tick-borne diseases. It is important to contact your healthcare provider if you are experiencing any of these symptoms.

Common symptoms can include tiredness, body/muscle aches, joint pain, fever, rash, stiff neck, and facial paralysis. The type and severity of symptoms vary with the specific disease.

Data and projections

At-risk populations

- People who spend recreational time outdoors
- Outdoor workers
- Pet owners
- Gardeners

Tick-borne illness and symptoms

900+ cases per year

Lyme disease is extremely common in Rhode Island.

Changing temperature and precipitation patterns could make conditions more hospitable for ticks.

4th

Rhode Island has the fourth-highest rate of Lyme disease in the country.

2X

Washington County has the highest rate of Lyme disease in the state; nearly twice the rate of Newport and Bristol counties.

Ticks are found throughout Rhode Island. Tick-borne diseases are transmitted through the bite of an infected tick. You are most likely to be bitten by a tick in the spring, summer, or fall; however, ticks can survive in the winter if temperatures are above freezing. Warmer winters could increase the number of ticks and the risk for spreading tickborne diseases like Lyme disease, babesiosis, anaplasmosis, ehrlichiosis, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, and Powassan.

Ticks can be infected with bacteria, viruses, or parasites. If you are bitten by an infected tick, you may become infected. Ticks usually are found in tall grass and leafy areas and often attach themselves to you in your armpits, groin, waistline, or in your hair.
**WHAT YOU CAN DO**

### AVOID DIRECT CONTACT WITH TICKS

- **X** Avoid wooded and brushy areas with high grass and leaf litter and walk in the center of trails.
- Wear long pants and long sleeves whenever possible. Wear light colored clothing so you can see the ticks more easily.
- Tuck your pants into your socks so ticks don’t crawl under your clothes.
- Use products that contain permethrin on shoes and clothing.
- When outdoors, use repellents containing 20% DEET, picaridin, IR3535, some oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol. Follow the directions on the package.

**Where to look:**
- Along your hairline
- Ears
- Back of your neck
- Armpits
- Groin
- Behind the knees
- Legs
- Between your toes

**Deer Tick actual size:**
- Nymph
- Adult Male
- Adult Female

### CHECK FOR TICKS

- Bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors (preferably within 2 hours) to wash off and more easily find ticks that are crawling on you.
- Conduct a full-body tick check using a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body upon return from tick-infested areas.
- Examine gear and pets. Ticks can ride into the home on clothing and pets, then attach to a person later, so carefully examine pets, coats, and day packs.

### REMOVE TICKS FROM YOUR BODY

- To remove an attached tick, grasp with tweezers as close as possible to the attachment (skin) site, and pull upward and out with a firm and steady pressure. If tweezers are not available, use fingers shielded with tissue paper or rubber gloves.