

Patient Education: Tick Removal

- Ticks that have embedded into your skin must be removed to prevent the transmission of tick-borne infections.
- There are numerous species of ticks in Saskatchewan, but not all can transmit infections to humans.
- Black-legged ticks, responsible for the transmission of Lyme disease, are found in very low numbers in Saskatchewan and are not a major concern.
- Wood ticks, responsible for the transmission of Rickettsia and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, can also be found in Saskatchewan.
- Monitor for signs and symptoms of infection and follow-up with your health care provider:
 - Fever
 - Chills
 - Headache
 - muscle and joint pain
 - fatigue
 - swollen lymph nodes
 - Rash around where the tick was embedded

Prevention of tick bites:

- Examine yourself and pets for ticks
- Stay to the center of hiking trails or paths
- Wear light-colored clothing with long sleeves and pants to make it easier to see ticks crawling on your clothing
- Tuck clothing in where possible
- Use an appropriate tick repellent
- Launder clothing that has been worn outdoors

Removal of ticks yourself:

- Use a fine-tipped tweezer to grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible.
- Pull slowly upward and out with a firm steady pressure.
- Take care not to squeeze, crush, or puncture the body after removal as this may also contain infectious fluids.
- Follow-up with your healthcare provider if you think tick mouth parts have been left behind in the skin.

