

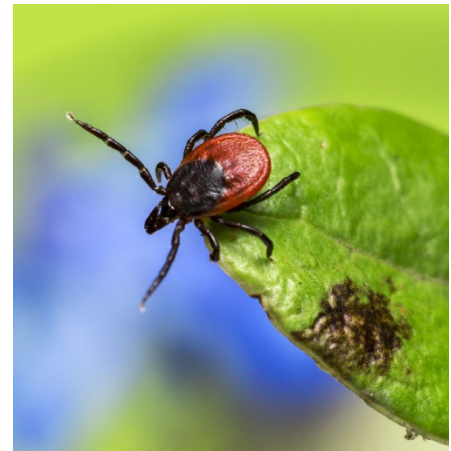


## Controlling Ticks Around Your Home



People who live in California most often find ticks when hiking or exploring the great outdoors. But some people live in regions where they may find ticks in their own backyard, especially in northern coastal counties and the Sierra Nevada foothills. This is especially true for people who live next to natural forests and grasslands.

Ticks are found outdoors in shaded, brushy, wooded areas on plants, rocks, logs, and in leaves and twigs on the ground. Ticks wait in these areas for a person or animal to brush against them so they can attach and feed on their blood. When a tick bites a person or a pet, it can transmit diseases such as Lyme disease. The best ways to prevent tick-borne diseases are to **1) protect yourself from tick bites**, and **2) control ticks around your home**. If you live in an area where you are likely to encounter ticks, there are things you can do to control ticks around your home and reduce your risk of getting a tick-borne disease.



**Tick-Safe Landscaping:** One way to keep ticks away from your home is to landscape your yard so that it will be less desirable for ticks. Ticks prefer to live in shady, humid, overgrown areas, especially in tall grass and overgrown vegetation. Ticks are usually not found out in open, sunny areas such as on mowed lawns. To create a tick-safe yard through landscaping:

- Keep your lawn and decorative plants trimmed and well maintained.
- Remove leaf and grass litter from your yard.
- Create a tick barrier at the edge of your property by putting down a 3-foot gravel or wood chip border between your lawn and any unmaintained or overgrown natural areas that you may live next to (such as chaparral or woodland areas).
- Move yard furniture and swing sets away from the edges of the yard to more open and sunny areas.

**Keep Ticks Off Your Pets:** Ticks are the ultimate hitchhikers – they can easily grab onto a pet or other animal that might be exploring in tall grass or overgrown areas. Pets can then bring ticks back home into your yard or house. Protecting your pets against hitchhiking ticks helps keep you and your pets from getting diseases that are transmitted by ticks.

- Talk to your veterinarian about tick control medication for your pets. Some products can be applied directly on your pet, and others can be given by mouth. For additional protection against Lyme disease in dogs, there is a canine Lyme disease vaccine available.
- Keep your animals out of overgrown and brushy areas.
- Check your pets daily for ticks, especially after they have been outdoors in brushy, overgrown areas. If you find any ticks on your pets, remove them right away. Learn where to check your pets for ticks: [CDC Preventing Ticks on Your Pets webpage](https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/avoid/on_pets.html) ([https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/avoid/on\\_pets.html](https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/avoid/on_pets.html)).



**Keep Wild Animals Out:** In nature, ticks feed on wild animals such as rodents, deer, and birds. One way to keep ticks away from your home is to keep wild animals out of your yard and away from outdoor areas where people spend time.

- Use 8-foot fences to keep larger animals such as deer out of your yard and garden.
- Keep trash cans closed and away from your house to discourage rodent and other animal activity.
- Keep woodpiles neatly stacked and away from your house to reduce areas where rodents might live.
- Do not overfill bird feeders, since the extra food may attract rodents and other animals. Keep bird feeders away from outdoor areas where people spend time to reduce interactions between wild animals and humans.



**Area and Perimeter Yard Treatments:** Pesticides designed to kill ticks can be used to reduce the number of ticks in your yard. There are a variety of home-use pesticide products available to treat your yard. Some commonly available treatments may have one of the following active ingredients that work to control ticks: permethrin, bifenthrin, and pyrethrin. Some products may also contain an insect growth regulator (IGR), such as pyriproxyfen, which stops ticks and other insects from growing and developing normally. Other products include botanical oils such as rosemary and wintergreen, but these ingredients don't work as well to control ticks. When applying pesticides, always read and follow the safety instructions on the label. For information on using pesticides in your yard, see the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) Citizen's Guide to Pest Control and Pesticide Safety resource](#). Other tips for safely applying pesticides include:

- Make sure you are using a product that has been approved for tick control. For a list of products approved for tick control, see the [Connecticut Agricultural Station's Tick Management Handbook](#).
- Apply the product only in the way that is recommended on the label.
- Focus pesticide applications on areas where ticks are common. Do not apply pesticides in areas where pollinators (like bees), pets, and people often spend time.
- Never apply pesticide products to someone else's yard.

**Professional Pest Control Options:** Some pest control companies provide professional tick control services. They may use several management techniques, known as integrated tick management (ITM), to reduce the number of ticks in your yard. ITM may include consultation, rodent management, and pesticide applications. For more information about ITM, contact your local pest control company.

Even if you take these steps to control ticks around your home, you may still come into contact with ticks. To protect yourself, it's important to know what time of year ticks are common in California, and what to do if you find a tick:

- In California, young, nymphal western blacklegged ticks (which can transmit Lyme disease) are most active in late spring through early summer. Adult ticks are most active in the late fall and winter.
- If you find a tick crawling on you, brush it off. If you find a tick attached to your skin, remove it with tweezers as soon as possible. Learn more: [CDPH Lyme Disease webpage](#) (<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/LymeDisease.aspx>).

**For more information:**

Tick bite prevention and tick-borne diseases in California:

- [CDPH Tick-Borne Diseases webpage](#)  
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Tick-Borne-Diseases.aspx>

Tick bite prevention and tick-borne diseases in the United States:

- [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Tick website](https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/index.html)  
<https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/index.html>

Detailed summary of tick management strategies:

- [Connecticut Agricultural Station's Tick Management Handbook](http://www.ct.gov/caes/lib/caes/documents/special_features/tickhandbook.pdf)  
[http://www.ct.gov/caes/lib/caes/documents/special\\_features/tickhandbook.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/caes/lib/caes/documents/special_features/tickhandbook.pdf)

Tick repellents or pesticide products:

- [Environmental Protection Agency Pesticide website](https://www.epa.gov/pesticides)  
<https://www.epa.gov/pesticides>
- [CDPH Tick Repellent webpage](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Tick-Repellent.aspx)  
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Tick-Repellent.aspx>

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