

PREVENTION GUIDES

# Tick Prevention Family Checklist

Seasonal protection for the whole family — before, during, and after outdoor time.

**Tick season peaks April through September**, but ticks can be active any time temperatures are above freezing. In many regions, tick risk is now year-round.

## BEFORE YOU GO OUTSIDE

- Apply EPA-registered repellent containing DEET (20–30%), picaridin, or IR3535 to exposed skin
- Treat clothing and gear with permethrin (remains effective through multiple washes)
- Wear long sleeves and pants — tuck pants into socks in high-risk areas
- Choose light-colored clothing (makes ticks easier to spot)
- Check weather/tick risk forecasts for your area
- Tell someone where you're hiking or spending time outdoors

## WHILE OUTDOORS

- Stay on the center of trails — avoid brushing against tall grass or leaf litter
- Avoid sitting directly on the ground or stone walls in wooded areas
- Check for ticks periodically during extended outdoor activities
- Keep pets on leash and check them regularly
- Be especially vigilant in wooded areas, meadow edges, and gardens

## WHEN YOU COME INSIDE

- Do a full-body tick check within 2 hours of coming indoors
- Check: under arms, in/around ears, inside belly button, back of knees, in hair, between legs, around waist
- Check children's hair carefully — a fine-toothed comb helps
- Check all pets before they come inside
- Tumble dry clothing on HIGH heat for 10 minutes to kill any remaining ticks
- Shower within 2 hours — showering helps wash off unattached ticks

## Protecting Your Yard

- Clear leaf litter, brush, and tall weeds regularly — especially at lawn edges
- Keep grass mowed short
- Create a 3-foot wood chip or gravel barrier between lawn and wooded areas
- Keep play equipment, decks, and patios away from yard edges and trees
- Consider tick-targeted pesticide applications in high-risk zones (consult a licensed applicator)
- Discourage deer with fencing or deer-resistant plants

**Found a tick? See our [After a Tick Bite](https://projectlyme.org/ticks-prevention/after-a-tick-bite/) guide for step-by-step next steps.  
[projectlyme.org/ticks-prevention/after-a-tick-bite/](https://projectlyme.org/ticks-prevention/after-a-tick-bite/)**