

# Is This a Good Way to Remove a Tick? – Spot Safety Mistake



Ticks cause Lyme disease and other illnesses and should be removed as quickly as possible. Removing the tick within 36 hours greatly reduces the risk of infection. But using your fingers to remove a tick as displayed in the photo may result in crushing, twisting or jerking the tick's body away and leaving the mouth parts that transmit diseases attached to the victim. **Moral:** Make sure you follow safe methods for removing an attached tick.

## What's At Stake – Tick Bite Hazards

If you work or play outdoors, you're at risk of getting Lyme disease or another tick-borne illness. Lyme disease doesn't kill; it just ruins lives. It complicates pregnancy. And it inflicts harms that can last years and even a lifetime, including:

- Aching and stiff joints
- Pounding headaches
- Severe fatigue
- Shortness of breath
- Irregular heartbeat.

## **Who's At Risk of Lyme Disease**

You're at greatest risk of Lyme disease if you work:

- Outdoors
- In coastal or southern BC, southern Manitoba, mid to southern New Brunswick, western or southern Ontario, southern Québec or any part of Nova Scotia
- In or near the woods, grassy areas, tall weeds and other tick habitats
- During the tick season of May to October.

Occupations in which work is done outdoors with the highest risk of Lyme disease include:

- Brush clearing
- Construction
- Farming
- Forestry
- Landscaping
- Land surveying
- Logging
- Mining
- Oil field work
- Park and wildlife management
- Railroad work
- Utility line work.

## **How You Can Get Lyme Disease**

Lyme disease is caused by ticks, tiny 8-legged insects that attach themselves to other animals and suck their blood. Not

all ticks cause Lyme disease. But ticks that feed on deer and rodents may pick up a bacterium that causes the disease. And if you get bitten by one of these infected ticks, it may spread the Lyme disease bacterium to you.

## 6 Steps to Take to Safely Remove a Tick

There's a right and a wrong way to remove a tick that's attached to you or another person:

1. Use a pair of fine-tipped tweezers, **not** your fingers.
2. Grasp the tick's body as close as possible to the victim's skin or scalp.
3. Pull the tick straight up and out in one steady motion—jerking, twisting or squeezing may cause the mouth parts to remain attached.

4. If the mouth parts do remain attached, try to remove them with the tweezers.

5. Clean the wound and tweezers with an antiseptic.

6. Do not use petroleum jelly or nail polish removers, or prick or burn the tick – this can cause infected materials to get into the wound