

## TICK BITES AND LYME DISEASE

### What are ticks?

Ticks are tiny spider-like creatures that live in grass, woodland, and sometimes gardens. A bite itself is usually painless, but ticks can occasionally carry a bacteria that causes Lyme disease.

About 6 in every 100 ticks in England and Wales carry Lyme disease, although this varies in different areas and from year to year.

### Where are ticks found?

Ticks can be found in many places



Ticks are most active from spring to autumn, though they can be found all year round.

They are not just in the countryside - they can also be found in parks and even private gardens.

Lyme disease can also be picked up abroad, especially in parts of central and northern Europe (including Scandinavia) and the north-eastern USA.

### How to avoid bites

- Cover arms and legs when walking through long grass or woodland
- Use insect repellent on skin and clothing
- Keep to clear paths when possible
- Check yourself, children (especially scalp and hairline), and pets for ticks after being outdoors
- Remove ticks promptly with a tick remover or fine-tipped tweezers

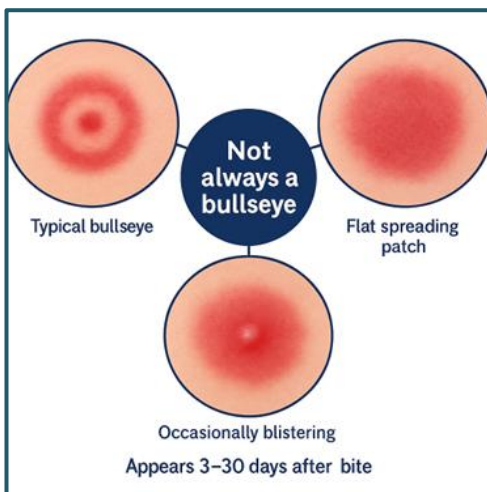


## How to remove a tick

- Use a tick remover or fine-tipped tweezers
- Grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible
- Pull upwards slowly and steadily - do not twist or crush the tick
- Clean the bite area with soap and water afterwards



## Signs of Lyme disease



- A spreading red rash at the site of the bite is the most common early sign. It often looks like a "bullseye target" and usually develops within 3–30 days.
- If this rash appears, treatment should be started straight away - a blood test is not needed first.
- Not everyone gets a rash. Some people may notice flu-like symptoms (fever, tiredness, muscle aches, headache) or later problems such as nerve pains, tingling, or weakness of the face muscles.

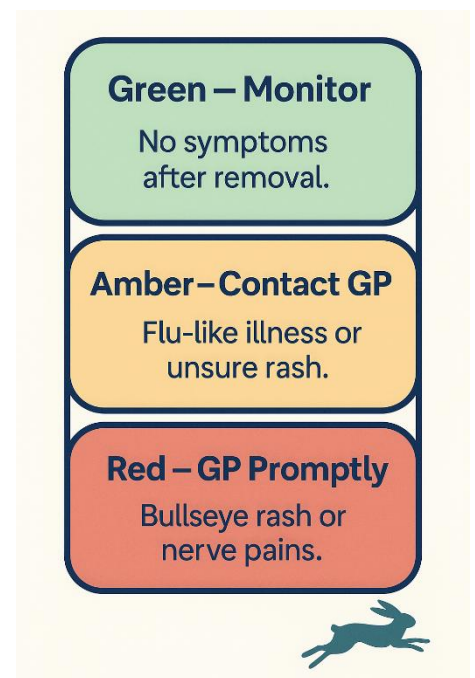
## When to seek medical advice

See your GP if you develop:

- A bullseye rash after a tick bite
- Flu-like symptoms or nerve pains after a tick bite, even if you did not see a rash
- Any other worrying symptoms after being bitten by a tick

If the bite itself becomes red, swollen or painful, it may be infected - see your GP or pharmacist.

Antibiotics are not usually given after a bite unless a clinician advises. Most people who are treated promptly for Lyme disease recover fully.



## Useful resources

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- Ask your pharmacist
- Patient UK - [www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)
- NHS: Lyme disease  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease/>
- UKHSA tick awareness leaflet  
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/642bec29fbe620000f17dbbe/Tick-awareness-A5-leaflet-April-2023.pdf>

### ***If you have further questions:***

- The best way to contact us is to fill out a ***Triage*** form via our website.
- If you are unable to do this, call the ***practice*** on *01285 653184 or 01285 653122* and reception will be able to complete a form on your behalf.
- If you require ***urgent*** medical advice, call *111 (24 hours)*
- In an ***emergency*** call ***999***