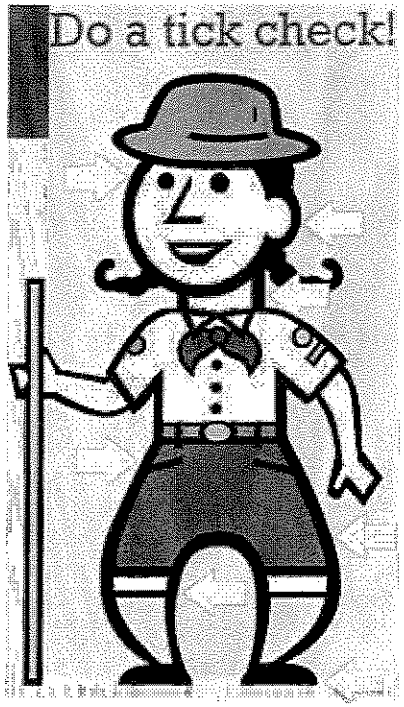
The Official Website of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS)

Health and Human Services

Personal Protection Against Ticks

One of the most important things you can do is check yourself for ticks once a day. Favorite places ticks like to go on your body include areas between the toes, back of the knees, groin, armpits, and neck, along the hairline, and behind the ears. Remember to check your children and pets, too. Remove any attached ticks as soon as possible.

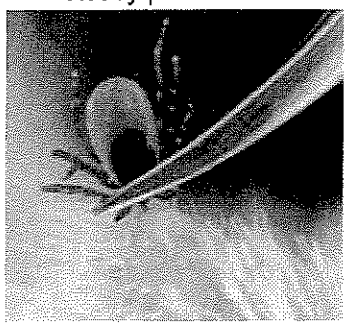
- Check yourself, your children and your pets for ticks after coming inside. **Here's where to look:**



  - Inside and behind the ears
  - Along your hairline
  - Back of your neck
  - Armpits
  - Groin
  - Legs
  - Behind your knees
  - Between your toes

- **Ticks are tiny, so look for new "freckles"**
- If you find a tick attached to your skin, don't panic. Use a pair of fine point tweezers to grip the tick as close to the skin as possible and pull straight out

with steady pressure.



- You **should not** apply kerosene, petroleum jelly, nail polish, or a hot match tip to remove the tick. These measures are not effective and may result in injury.
- Circle the calendar date and note where on the body the tick was removed. You may want to save the tick for identification.
- Your physician may choose to treat you following a deer tick bite. Notify your health care provider if you have been bitten by a deer tick or if you develop a rash or other signs of illness following a tick bite

- Talk to your doctor if you develop a rash where you were bitten or experience symptoms such as fever, headache, fatigue, or sore and aching muscles.
- When going outside to an area likely to have ticks:
  - Stick to main pathways and the center of trails when hiking.
  - Wear a light-colored, long-sleeved shirt with long pants and tuck your pants into your socks. This may be difficult to do when the weather is hot, but it will help keep ticks away from your skin and make it easier to spot a tick on your clothing.
  - Use bug repellents. Repellents that contain DEET can be used on your exposed skin. Permethrin is a product that can be used on your clothes. Always follow the product instructions and use repellents with no more than 30-35% DEET on adults and 10-15% DEET on children. Never use insect repellents on infants. There are fact sheets containing more information about repellents at mass.gov/dph/epi

- Talk to your veterinarian about the best ways to protect your pets and livestock from ticks.

This information is provided by Epidemiology Program within the Department of Public Health.

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