

# Tick Bite: What to Do

The five steps in order, the do-not list, and the symptoms that mean call your doctor.

✓ **Verified against published guidance** from CDC, Mayo Clinic & Cleveland Clinic · sources below

**Remove an attached tick as soon as you find it. Do not wait for a doctor's visit to take it off.**



## Do This

### Grab It Close to the Skin

- Clean fine-tipped tweezers
- As close to the skin as possible
- Regular tweezers or fingers work

**COACH'S TIP** Avoid squeezing the tick's body.

### Pull Steady, Even, Straight

- No twisting or jerking
- Mouthparts can break off
- Left behind? Skin pushes them out

**COACH'S TIP** If tweezers cannot lift them easily, leave them alone.

### Dispose of It Safely

- Sealed container or tape
- Put it in alcohol, or flush it
- Take a photo first

**COACH'S TIP** A photo helps your provider identify the tick and your risk.

### Clean Everything After

- Bite area and your hands
- Soap and water
- Rubbing alcohol or hand sanitizer

**COACH'S TIP** Simple, boring, effective.

### Check Your Whole Body

- Scalp, ears, armpits
- Groin, behind knees, waistline
- Check your pets too

**COACH'S TIP** One attached tick often means another.

### Watch the Calendar

- Note the bite date
- Rash or fever within weeks
- See your doctor, mention the bite

**COACH'S TIP** Tell them when and where you picked up the tick.



## Do Not

### Do Not Use Home Tricks

- No petroleum jelly
- No heat or a lit match
- No nail polish

**COACH'S TIP** They can force infected fluid from the tick into your skin.

### Do Not Twist or Jerk It

- That breaks mouthparts off
- Steady, even pressure wins
- Straight out only

**COACH'S TIP** The CDC is specific about this one.

### Do Not Crush It With Fingers

- Not while attached
- Not after removal
- Sealed, taped, or flushed instead

**COACH'S TIP** Crushing can spread germs.

### Do Not Wait for a Doctor to Remove It

- Delay raises disease risk
- Remove it yourself, now
- Then watch for symptoms

**COACH'S TIP** Removal speed is the one thing you control.

### Do Not Mail It for Testing

- Results should not guide treatment
- A negative can falsely reassure
- Symptoms come first

**COACH'S TIP** If you get sick, do not wait on a tick test.

### Do Not Ignore Flu-Like Symptoms

- Fever or chills
- Aches and unusual fatigue
- An expanding or bullseye rash

**COACH'S TIP** Within weeks of a bite, that means a doctor visit.

## THE NUMBERS BEHIND THIS SHEET

Three figures worth knowing before tick season

About 476,000

Estimated people diagnosed and treated for Lyme disease in the US each year

Days to weeks

The symptom watch window after any tick bite

Poppy seed

How small a feeding tick can be, easy to miss entirely