

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Jeanne M. Lambrew, Ph.D.
Commissioner



Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
11 State House Station
286 Water Street
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Tel; (207) 287-8016; Fax (207) 287-9058
TTY: Dial 711 (Maine Relay)

Tick Free ME Combating Tickborne Disease through One Health

Longer and warmer days are upon us, which means ticks are already active. With recent increases in pet ownership, the role of veterinarians in helping to protect pets and their people from tickborne disease is more important than ever.

Lyme Disease Awareness Month

Veterinarians play an important role in educating pet owners about the risks of tickborne diseases not only for their pets, but also for themselves and their families. This May's Lyme Disease Awareness Month theme is "Tick Free ME." Please join Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) in helping all Mainers to be tick free by reminding them to:

1. Know tick habitat and use caution in areas where ticks may live.
2. Wear light-colored clothing that covers arms and legs.
3. Use EPA-approved repellent such as: DEET, picaridin, IR3535, and oil of lemon eucalyptus on skin. Use permethrin on clothing.
4. Perform daily tick checks after being outdoors on themselves and any pets. Showering after exposure to tick habitat may help wash off any unattached ticks.
5. Use tick prevention products on pets to help reduce the number of ticks brought into the home and protect pets from tickborne diseases.

Tickborne Diseases in Maine

Lyme disease remains the most common vectorborne disease in Maine, with health care providers reporting over 2,600 human Lyme disease cases in 2022 (as of March 7, 2023). Lyme disease is not the only disease carried by deer ticks in Maine. Anaplasmosis, babesiosis, Hard Tick Relapsing Fever (HTRF, *Borrelia miyamotoi* disease), and Powassan virus disease are other tickborne diseases found in Maine. Providers reported cases of all four diseases in 2022, with the highest number of Powassan virus disease cases in at least a decade.

Resources for Pet Owner Outreach

- **Tick Testing and Identification.** Information about tick identification and testing services at the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Tick Lab available at www.ticks.umaine.edu.
- **Tickborne disease educational materials.** Find tick identification resources and other educational materials available to order at www.maine.gov/dhhs/order.
- **Tickborne disease data.** Human Lyme disease data available through the Maine Tracking Network at www.maine.gov/lyme under "Maine Tracking Network: Tickborne Diseases" on the left-hand side of the page.

- **Social Media.** Find tickborne disease social media to share at Maine CDC's social media accounts on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#). Find short informational videos to share on Maine CDC's [YouTube channel](#).
- **Newsletter.** Find information ready to send to clients at www.maine.gov/lyme/month.
- **For additional questions**, please call Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821 or email disease.reporting@maine.gov.