

How to remove a tick

- The standard method to remove an embedded tick is to use rounded tweezers and grasp the tick as close as possible to your skin surface and then pull with slow steady pressure in a direction away from the skin.
- Take care not to crush or squeeze the body of the tick, because fluid forced out of the tick may contain infectious agents.
- After the tick is removed, wash the bite site with soap and water or an antiseptic. Wash your hands.
- It may be a good idea to save the tick, in case later identification may be necessary.
- Traditional methods of tick removal, such as applying fingernail polish, rubbing alcohol, or a hot match head to the tick, do not affect tick detachment. These methods also may induce the tick to salivate or regurgitate into the wound, thus transmitting more infectious agent.

In general preventive antibiotics are not recommended for those people, without symptoms, who seek medical treatment after finding and removing a tick. Clinical trials have demonstrated that the adverse reactions to antibiotics outweigh the benefits of disease prevention in most cases, because the chance of disease transmission is so low in this population.

When to seek medical attention

If you find a tick attached to your body, after properly removing it, save the tick and contact your doctor.

If you are in a region where tick exposure is likely and you develop symptoms of fever, headache, rash or flu-like illness, contact your doctor immediately for further evaluation.

All people suffering from tick bites with symptoms should not donate blood for 120 days after the bite has occurred or until having a medical evaluation.