

Code of Practice No. 24

TICKS AND LYME DISEASE

This code of practice is to advise about ticks and Lyme Disease and what preventions can be taken and what action to take if bitten by a tick.

This Code of Practice should be used in conjunction with Code of Practice No. 10 Practical Conservation and Safety.

TICKS AND LYME DISEASE

Ticks are small, spider-like creatures that feed on the blood of animals, including humans. They can vary in size with larvae being as small as freckle, to adults being similar in size to a baked bean.

Ticks live in many habitats but are particularly found in long grass and leaf litter in woodlands, grassland, moorlands, heathland and some urban parks and gardens. They attach to skin when a host passes by and will feed for several days before dropping off. Ticks are found throughout the year but are most active between spring and autumn.

Ticks can transmit diseases such as Lyme disease. It is important that you remain aware, even if you are not aware that you have bitten. Symptoms of Lyme disease can include:

- A red "bullseye" rash
- Flu-like symptoms
- Fatigue
- Muscle and joint pain
- Migraines

If you have been bitten or have any concerns that you may have been bitten, it is important to seek medical advice from NHS 111 or your GP

27.1 What can I do to prevent being bitten by a tick?

To avoid being bitten, you should try to stick to clear paths and avoid brushing against vegetation.

Ensure you have fine tipped tweezers or a tick removal tool on you whilst you are out.

You should try to wear long, light coloured clothing so that you are able to see any ticks that may get onto your clothing. In particularly high risk areas consider wearing protective clothing such as full body overalls.

Repellents containing DEET will minimise the risk of any ticks biting your skin and you should always carry out a full check of your clothes and body after your outdoors activity.

27.2 What should I do if I am bitten by a tick?

If you notice that you have been bitten, remove the tick as soon as possible using fine tipped tweezers or a tick removal tool. You should pull the tick from as close to the skin as possible, ensuring you remove the head. After removal, clean and monitor the area for any redness or swelling.

Seek medical advice immediately if you are unable to remove the tick or the head.

27.3 More Information

More information can be found:

- [On the NHS website](#)
- [Lyme Disease Action UK](#)

(Links to external websites are offered in good faith. Butterfly Conservation has no control over the content of the sites and no endorsement is implied of any products or services)

Footnote:

A **hazard** is something that can cause harm, eg electricity, chemicals, working at a computer etc.

A **risk** is the chance, high or low, that any **hazard** will actually cause somebody harm.