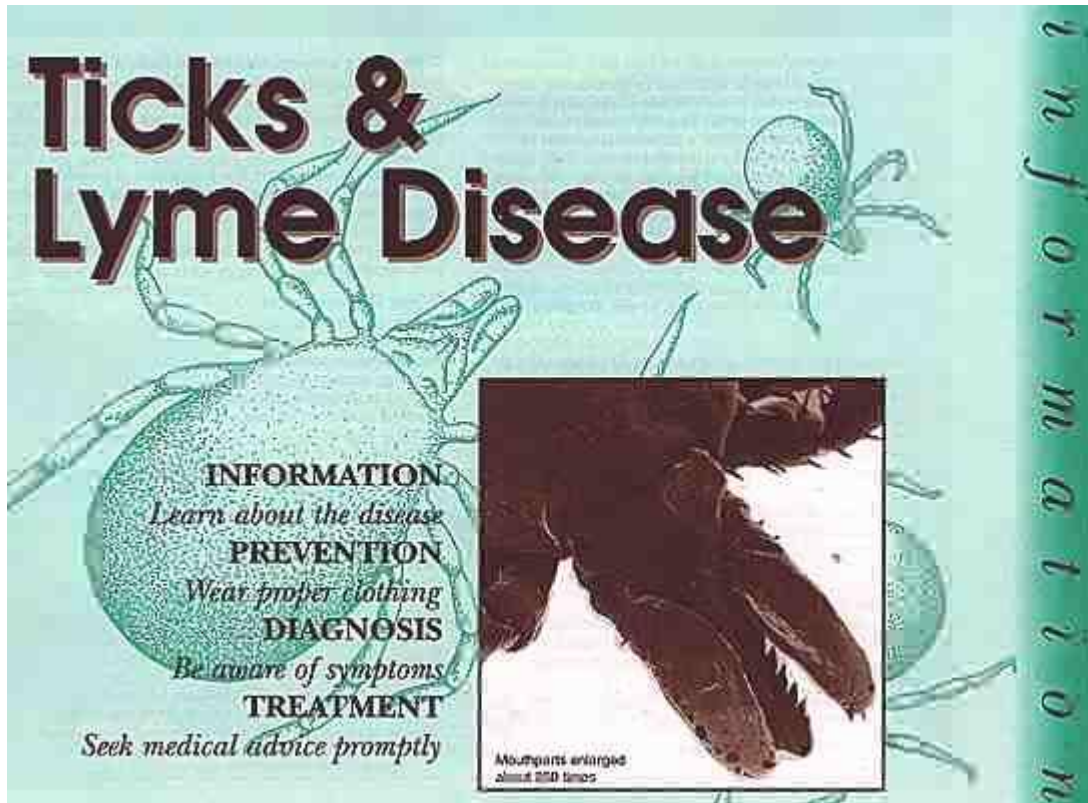


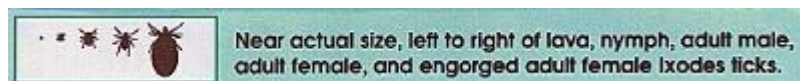
# Ticks & Lyme Disease



You and your dog may be at risk from Lyme Disease when you visit the countryside. Lyme Disease is a relatively uncommon infection (in the UK,) but it has recently started to occur more frequently. It is caused by a bacterium carried by ticks. People who walk in the countryside, especially those walking through grass, rough vegetation or wild areas such as heathland, are more at risk. This leaflet describes some simple precautions which you should take when you visit the countryside.

## What is Lyme Disease?


- 🦋 Lyme Disease is an infection which can affect the skin and occasionally cause serious illness of the nervous system, joints or heart.
- 🦋 It is caused by a spiral-shaped bacterium, transmitted by the bite of an infected tick.
- 🦋 Ticks are tiny spider-like creatures which live in woodland, moorland and grassy areas. Unlike spiders, however, they press themselves close to the skin of the host as they crawl.




The highest risk was thought to be from April to October when the tick was most active and feeding, but research has now shown that, in certain areas, ticks may be active most of the year.


## Can it be prevented?


Yes. The ticks cling to ends of vegetation and wave their legs around hoping to latch on to a passing animal or person - so your first defence is to keep your skin covered.

 If a tick attaches itself to your clothing, it may crawl around for some time before making contact with your skin.

 Wear long trousers, tucked into socks if possible, and long-sleeved shirts.

 Light coloured clothes will help you spot ticks and brush them off.

 Inspect for ticks every few hours and, if possible, at the end of your day's outdoor activity, undress and completely check your body for ticks.

 Insect repellent on clothing and repellent collars for pets may help.

## What if I am bitten?

Remove the tick as soon as possible by grasping it close to the skin with tweezers. Apply gentle pressure, twisting anti-clockwise upwards, repeating if necessary. Part of the tick may remain embedded, but you will have prevented the tick transferring the infection to you. (Save the tick in a sealed container in case you develop symptoms later.)

They will crawl about before biting.

An infected tick will not usually pass on the infection until it is fully engorged with blood.

Not every tick carries Lyme Disease.

Not every bite will transmit the disease, even if the tick is infected and not removed.

Check your pets for ticks and remove them.


## Should I see my Doctor?

Infection is unlikely unless the tick is attached for more than 24 hours. If a rash or 'flu-like illness develops after you have been exposed to ticks, or the site becomes infected, seek medical advice promptly.

## Habitat of Ticks

Ticks are found where there is a combination of the following:

 dead vegetation or leaf litter

 passing host animals

Many parts of the U.K. are potential tick habitats. Recently, it has been found that ticks from many of these areas carry the infection.

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<http://www.wadhurst.demon.co.uk/lyme/lyme3.htm>

## EU publication:

<http://vie.dis.strath.ac.uk/vie/LymeEU/index.htm>

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