



## Lyme disease Information

Caudwell  
LymeCo  
charity



### If you notice an attached tick...

#### TAKE A PHOTO

Show this to your doctor if you become ill later.

Do not delay removing the tick if you don't have a camera handy.

**Prompt removal** is essential. Ticks can infect you after being attached for 16 hours, or possibly less.

**Do not distress the tick** before removing it, do not apply substances or do anything to disturb it. This will make it more likely to regurgitate bacteria into your blood.

**Use a tick remover** if possible. They include fine nosed or special tweezers, tick cards, tick hooks or twisters, and tick lassos, which are appropriate for different sized and positioned ticks. Pulling out a tick takes steady, sometimes considerable, upward force.

**Phone ahead and ask** before you go to your GP, a vet's or a chemist's shop seeking tick removal tools. A&E may result in a long wait. Dentists have fine tweezers which can remove ticks.

**Use long finger nails** if you have no tick remover.

**Do not squeeze the tick.** You need to insert the tweezers or remover underneath its body, next to the skin.

**Remove the mouth parts** (a thin tube) if possible. If they are left in, the bite area could go septic but this can be treated.

**Disinfect the bite area** with alcohol/hydrogen peroxide/skin disinfectant.

#### SAVE THE TICK FOR POSSIBLE TESTING

**Bag the tick** and label it with date, time, and name of the person bitten.

Freeze it.

#### SEARCH THE REST OF YOUR BODY

**Other ticks** may be attached.

**Everyone with you** should check themselves.

**Check inside your clothing** including the groin area, navel and behind your knees.

**Have a companion check where you can't see**, such as behind your ears and around your hairline.

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fight Lyme disease

Visit [caudwellyme.com/info](https://caudwellyme.com/info) for more  
information on Lyme disease



**LOOK OUT FOR SYMPTOMS**



A reaction to the bite may develop immediately, but this is not a Lyme rash. It may or may not itch.

A Lyme rash (called Erythema Migrans or EM) may develop any time from 3 days to 3 months after the bite. It is a spreading red rash, not itchy or painful and not swollen. It may have rings and it may be circular, but Lyme rashes can take various forms and be difficult to identify.

Take photographs of the rash daily. Draw around it with a biro to monitor spreading.

Monitor for other symptoms because at least 1/3 of Lyme disease patients never develop a rash. This can include flu-like symptoms such as fever, swollen glands and tiredness; neck pain or stiffness; joint or muscle pain; memory problems or trouble concentrating; headache; numbness or paralysis in any part of your body. Symptoms may be mild or severe. Keep a diary of symptoms.

If you develop any Lyme symptoms, go to your doctor immediately. Consider asking to see a GP who has done the LDA/RCGP online course on Lyme disease.

If you have a Lyme rash, you need antibiotic treatment immediately. NHS guidance says that EM rash should be treated without a blood test to confirm the diagnosis.

Blood testing may be necessary if you do not have a rash, but antibodies can take 6 weeks to develop so the test may need to be repeated. A negative test does not rule out Lyme disease if you have a tick bite and symptoms.

If you are pregnant or immune-compromised, seek guidance immediately regardless of symptoms.

Take the full course of antibiotics if you are prescribed them. UK doctors do not usually prescribe treatment for people who have been bitten by a tick but have no symptoms.

If your symptoms have not fully cleared up when the antibiotics are finished, go back to the doctor to ask for a repeat course. Disappearance of the rash is no guarantee that the infection has gone.

Catching Lyme disease does not give lasting immunity, so you could catch it again.

Buy one or several tick removal tools online and know how to use them.

Use insect repellent, preferably containing citriodiol or icaridin, on exposed skin. Remember children have hands at grass height, so treat their hands and arms as well as legs.

Wear long trousers, and long sleeves if possible. Don't wear open sandals or shorts in risky environments.

Wear light coloured clothing so you can see ticks easily.

Consider treating clothes with permethrin, especially if you go camping.

Avoid long grass and plants. Tuck trousers into socks if you do need to walk through vegetation which will brush against you.

Shower and check for ticks when you arrive home. Remember how small ticks can be. Ask someone to help you look in places you cannot see, such as behind your ears.

Put clothes in a tumble-dryer for 10 minutes to kill ticks in seams and hems.



**WHEN TO SEE THE DOCTOR**



**PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE**



**VISIT [CAUDWELLYME.COM](http://CAUDWELLYME.COM) FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR TO DONATE AND HELP IMPROVE CARE FOR PEOPLE WITH LYME DISEASE**