



St. Lawrence County Public Health Department

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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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It's Open Season on Ticks!

St. Lawrence County Public Health Encourages Residents to Protect Themselves From Tickborne Disease this Hunting Season

Over the past five years, tickborne diseases such as Anaplasmosis, Babesiosis, Ehrlichiosis, and Lyme Disease have been on the rise in St. Lawrence County. While most tickborne infections occur during the summer months, ticks may be active well into the fall and throughout the hunting season. Ticks live in grassy or wooded areas and feed on the blood of animals such as deer, rabbits, and bears but will bite people too. Hunting may bring you in close contact with ticks. If you develop a fever, rash, headaches, or joint pain in the weeks following a hunting trip see your doctor immediately. Tickborne diseases can be treated effectively when caught early but when ignored may lead to long-term health problems.

Before the Hunt:

- Treat gear and clothing with .5% permethrin
- Use EPA-registered insect repellents
- Treat dogs for ticks
- Tuck your pants into your boots or socks and tuck your shirt into your pants to prevent ticks from crawling inside your clothing

During the Hunt:

- Walk in the center of the trails when possible
- Wear gloves when dressing or butchering game and wash hands thoroughly afterward

After the Hunt:

- Shower immediately after being outdoors
- Check your body for ticks daily
- Check dogs for ticks
- Remove any attached ticks
- Watch for fever, rash or flu-like illness even if you don't remember being bitten by a tick

Permethrin:

Permethrin is a broad-spectrum EPA-registered pesticide that targets biting insects such as ticks. Since 1990, permethrin has been approved as a spray for use on clothing and gear such as boots, pants, socks, and tents. Treating your clothing with permethrin can help protect you from tick bites.

When applying permethrin:

- Always put on protective gloves
- Always read the directions before you begin
- Lay clothing to be treated on a flat surface
- Spray clothing with 0.5% permethrin according to the directions
- Allow the clothes to completely dry before use
- Never apply permethrin directly to skin
- Wash permethrin-treated clothing separately from other clothes
- Re-treat clothing as needed to continue repelling ticks

Tick Bite: What to Do

- Remove the Tick as Soon as Possible
 - Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin as you can
 - Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk the tick
 - After removing the tick, clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol or soap and water
 - Dispose of the tick by flushing it down the toilet. If you would like to bring the tick to your healthcare provider for identification, put it in rubbing alcohol and place the tick in a sealed bag/container.
- Call your Healthcare Provider
 - Most tickborne diseases can be treated with a short course of antibiotics. However, it is important to seek treatment as soon as possible as many tickborne diseases can become more challenging to diagnose and treat in the long-term.
- Watch for Symptoms for 30 Days
 - Rash
 - Fever
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle Pain
 - Headaches
 - Joint pain and swelling

Further Information:

<https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/resources/OpenSeasonTicks-508.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/mosquitoes/mosquito-bites/how-to-use-permethrin.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncezid/dvbd/media/hunting-season-ticks.htm>

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