

Tick Removal
&
Links to Information on Tick Borne Disease
By Karen Priest

We live in an area with a lot of ticks! We also have a lot of dogs, and they like to play in our fields and go for walks on our wooded trails; all thriving tick habitats.

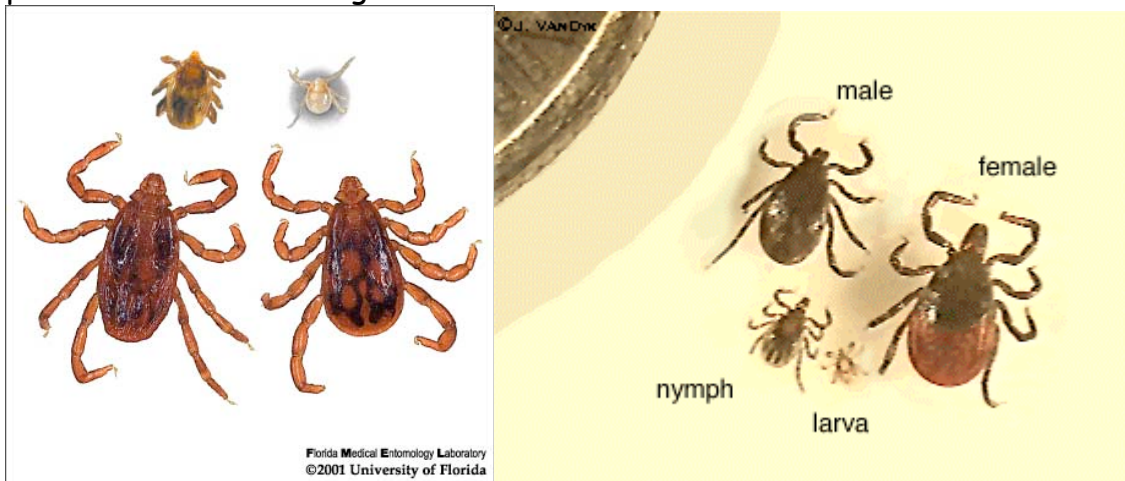
In our region, ticks are at their very worst in spring - late April or early May through June. The ticks are still there all through the summer, but are not quite as prolific in August's heat as they were in spring. Often, in late fall there is a resurgence of them, and then there are again less of them in winter. We have found ticks after walks in the woods even in February!

As a result of the large tick population, we have become adept at both "tick checking" and tick removal.

Even if you choose to use Frontline, or one of the other Tick repellents, ticks can still jump off your dog in your home or jump onto you. So, you will want to look for them and remove them from your environment.

Ticks are tiny, and not easily seen in German Shepherd's coat. You need to look very closely, especially paying attention to legs, tail, chest and face/ears. With a trained eye, you will see them faster. Sometimes, I can see a tick crawling on my dog's tan legs even as we are out walking. You can take a brush over your dog, and look for ticks caught in the brush bristles.

What are you looking for? Here are photos - larger than a real tick! The photos are of brown dog ticks and deer ticks.



Ticks should be placed in a jar of alcohol to kill them.

Despite your best efforts, some ticks will likely bite your dog. Once a tick attached, it is best to remove it as soon as you can. The longer a tick is attached, the higher chance it can transmit Lyme disease or Erlichiosis.

To remove a tick, you will need a few things handy.

- *Tweezer

- *Alcohol in a jar

- *Cotton ball and antiseptic and wound ointment

- *Tissues

Some folks use rubber gloves; I just wash my hands well afterwards.

Have someone hold your dog if you need. Grasp the tick as close to your dog's body as possible without grabbing skin. Pull straight out - do not twist. The tick should come free. Occasionally a tick will "break off" with the black mouth part still visible embedded in your dog's skin. Eventually, it will work its way out.

Once the tick is out, place it in the alcohol filled jar and replace lid. Swab some antiseptic on the bite, and add some wound ointment. I use triple antibiotic ointment. Some dogs are very sensitive to tick bites and they develop a nasty sore where the tick was.

Disinfect your tweezers with alcohol.

Here are links to Articles about Lyme Disease:

<http://www.thepetcenter.com/gen/lyme.html>

<http://www.peteducation.com/article.cfm?c=2+1556&aid=458>

<http://www.dogsandticks.com/faqs-lyme-disease-dogs-tick-diseases/>

Ticks can transmit Lyme Disease, Erlichiosis, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever to your pet. Ticks can also transmit Lyme disease to humans. When you walk your dog in areas likely to be hosting ticks, you should take some precautions for yourself. Where light colored pants, so you can see ticks more readily. Tuck pants into white socks, so ticks are less likely to crawl up your leg, underneath your pants. Tie long hair up. There are several topical sprays that repel ticks. (Deep Woods Off etc.) Always examine yourself for ticks after leaving the woods.

If you are bitten by a tick - meaning the tick was attached - and you have irritation at the site or a red bullseye rash, it is a good idea to see your Dr. You might have been exposed to Lyme disease & you will need antibiotics.