

Help Stay Tick-Free This Summer

With the continuing summer weather, people are spending more time outdoors and enjoying the beautiful Western Isles landscapes and scenery. However, following previous reports of higher tick numbers in the environment, NHS Western Isles is raising awareness of ticks and Lyme disease to ensure that people are aware of what they can do to avoid tick bites.

This year, its Health Protection Team has prepared free tick information packs for local businesses and accommodation providers, and each pack includes a new poster, leaflet and also a handy tick removing tool.

Isabell Mac Innes, NHS Western Isles Health Protection Nurse, said "We want to encourage everyone to enjoy the outdoors and all that the Western Isles has to offer. However, if you or your family are out and about, particularly in areas of rough grass and undergrowth, make sure you know how to protect yourself from being bitten and how to check each day for ticks."

The tick packs can be accessed by contacting the team via tel. (Lewis and Harris) 01851 708033 or (Uists & Barra) 01870 603366, or by emailing: wi.healthprotection@nhs.scot

In addition, there will be a Tick and Lyme disease information stall at the Lochs Show on Saturday 26th July for those wishing to pick up a free pack.

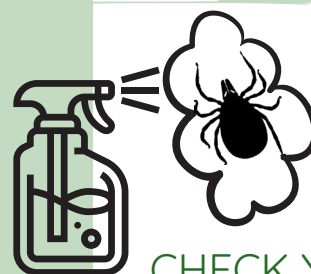
Prevent tick bites

Ticks don't jump or fly, but wait until an animal or person brushes past to climb on, so here are some simple steps to avoid coming into contact with ticks:

- keep exposed skin to a minimum, wear long sleeves and tuck trousers into socks
- wear light coloured clothing so ticks are easier to spot and brush off
- walk on paths, avoid brushing against vegetation
- take care in areas with dense vegetation
- use appropriate insect repellents (packaging will state whether it works for ticks).



DO'S:



REPELLENTS

Use insect repellents containing DEET

CHECK YOUR CLOTHES

Wear light coloured long clothing so ticks are easier to spot and brush off



Remove your clothes when arriving home; not in the bedroom, as ticks could remain on carpets/bedding.

CHECK YOUR SKIN

Ticks like warm, moist places; think waist, armpits, hair line, groin, ears

Keep exposed skin to a minimum. Wear long sleeves and tuck trousers into socks



GOING OUTSIDE

Avoid/take care in areas with dense vegetation

Walk on paths



PETS

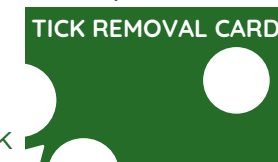
Wash pet bedding by itself at 50°C



REMOVING TICKS:

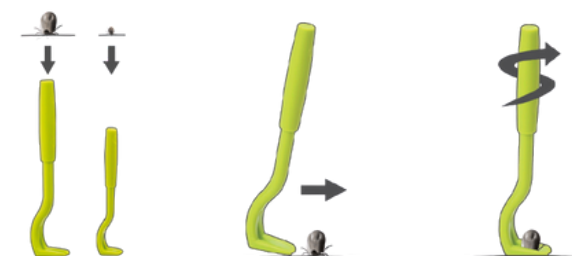
remove the tick as soon as possible

to use the card: place card between tick and skin. Then scrape the tick off



ensure all mouthparts are removed, any parts left in the skin can cause a local infection

to use the remover tool:



apply antiseptic to the bite area/wash with soap and water. Keep an eye on the site for several weeks for any changes

FOLLOWING A TICK BITE, IF YOU FEEL UNWELL WITH FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS OR DEVELOP A RASH AROUND THE SITE OF ATTACHMENT PLEASE CONSULT YOUR GP.

DO NOT

cover the tick with oils, lotions, chemicals or petroleum jelly

try to burn the tick off with a lit cigarette end or match. This can increase the likelihood of the tick passing on a disease

squeeze or squash the tick



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Western Isles

