

TICKS

Fact Sheet: Tick Avoidance & Management

Ticks May Make You Sick!

Most tick bites are harmless, however *Ixodes holocyclus* (commonly known as the “Paralysis tick”) may make you sick in several ways:

- A range of minor to major allergic reactions, even anaphylaxis.
- The development of allergy to red meat, often anaphylaxis.
- The transmission of specific diseases.
- Rare life threatening paralysis.

Paralysis Tick Biology

- There are four stages; the egg, larvae (0.5mm), nymph (1.5mm) and adult (3.5mm).
- Tick stages are seasonal, with larvae active during the autumn, nymphs in winter, and adults in the spring.
- The adult stage is the most dangerous, but any stage can lead to allergic reactions.

When Going Into the Aussie Bush

- Try to avoid peak ‘ticky’ times, especially after wet periods.
- Wear light coloured clothing to help spot ticks, and check yourself regularly.
- Tuck pants into socks, and shirts into pants.
- Apply repellents to the skin. Use those that contain DEET or Picaridin, and apply (and reapply) as per label directions.
- Soak clothing in permethrin washes (available from outdoor stores). Follow label instructions for application and re-application.
- After being in a ‘ticky’ area, remove clothing and place into a hot dryer for 20 minutes to kill any ticks that may still be present.

Avoiding Ticks Around the Home

- Install animal proof fencing. This prevents the host animals coming into your yard where they can drop ticks.
- If there are tick prone areas around the home, install fencing to prevent children from entering those area.
- Ticks do not like dry conditions! Keep overhanging foliage and leaf litter to a minimum, and mow lawns regularly.
- Apply insecticides to areas where ticks occur, you may need the service of a professional pest controller. Ensure that ticks are on the insecticide label.
- Regularly treat pets to prevent ticks; many dogs and cats die every year from tick paralysis.

More Information?

www.tiara.org.au (Tick induced mammalian meat allergy & tick allergy)

www.medent.usyd.edu.au (Tick fact sheets)

www.allergy.org.au

www.allergyfacts.org.au