

## Advice for the treatment of...

# Tick bites

Ticks are small, spider-like creatures which feed on the blood of birds and mammals, including humans. They are common in the New Forest and can be found anywhere outdoors, such as grassy or wooded areas.

Ticks do not need to be removed by a healthcare professional as it is usually straight forward and easy to do...

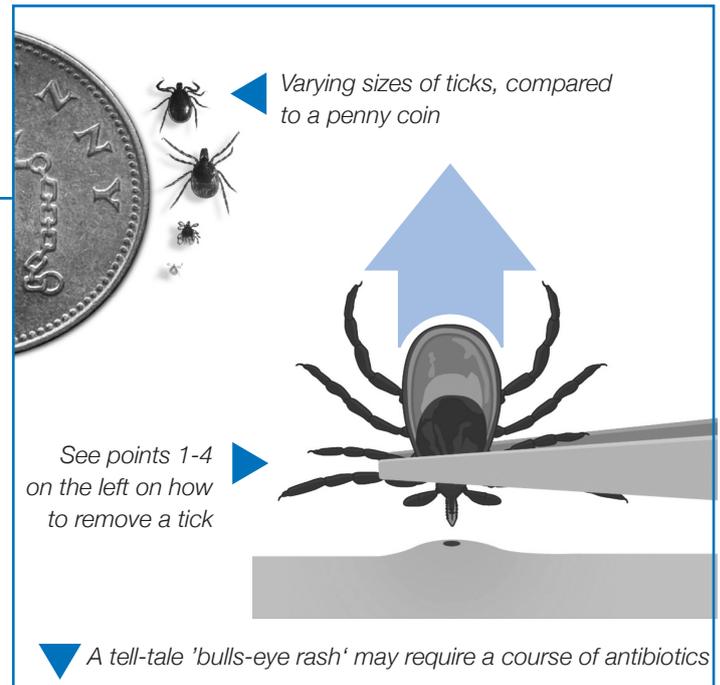
- Ticks can bite you anywhere on your body, including in your hair, so using insect repellent, staying to clearly defined paths when walking, and regular 'tick checks' are important
- It's important to remove ticks as quickly and as safely as possible as they can sometimes cause localised infection

### Here's what to do if you are bitten by a tick...

- 1 The best way to remove a tick is with a pair of fine-tipped tweezers or a tick removal tool
- 2 Grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible
- 3 Pull upwards, slowly and firmly. **Don't worry if the head remains in**, as any left-over parts of the tick will be expelled by the skin
- 4 Clean the bite area with antibacterial wash/soap and water and monitor it for 6-8 weeks for any changes.

Tick bites **rarely** cause bacterial infections such as **Lyme disease** or tick-borne encephalitis, and there have only been a few recorded cases in the last couple of years.

However once the tick is removed you should **monitor for signs of a 'bullseye rash'** otherwise known as *erythema migrans*, which can take up to 5-6 weeks to present. If this happens you should seek an assessment from a healthcare professional, as it may require a course of antibiotics.



Other symptoms to monitor for over a 3-month period after the tick bite is any onset of **'flu-like symptoms'** such as high temperature, headache, or muscle and joint pain.

If this occurs, you should seek an assessment from your GP to consider if you may have developed Lyme disease and a blood test may be necessary. If your GP thinks you have Lyme disease you will be prescribed a course of antibiotics.



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