



## How do I remove a tick?



**Your main aims are to remove the tick promptly, to remove all parts of the tick's body and to prevent it releasing additional saliva or regurgitating its stomach contents into your bite wound.**



### About Ticks

Tick bite risk reduction

Tick Removal

UK Tick images

Other Tick images

Other Tick Websites

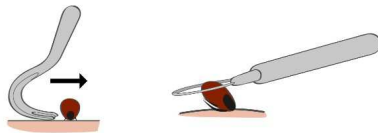
Tick Animation

### Conference

2017 Conference

**DO** use a proprietary [tick removal tool](#)\* (available from [this website](#) or many vets and pet shops), and follow the instructions provided. Two common types of removal tool available are illustrated on this page; the hook and the loop are designed to be twisted to facilitate removal.

These tools will grip the head of the tick without squashing the body.



\* Alternative Methods : With **pointed tweezers (not blunt eyebrow tweezers!)** grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible; without squeezing the tick's body, pull the tick out without twisting (it is difficult to twist tweezers without separating the tick's head from its body) – there may be considerable resistance.



Illustrations are for general guidance and do not represent any particular species.

If no tools are available, rather than delay use a **fine thread**, something like cotton or dental floss. Tie a single loop of thread around the tick's mouthparts, as close to the skin as possible, then pull upwards and outwards without twisting.

**DO** start by cleansing the tweezers/tool with antiseptic. After [tick removal](#), cleanse the bite site and the tool with antiseptic.

**DO** wash hands thoroughly afterwards.

**DO** save the tick in a container in case a doctor asks for evidence that you have been bitten (label it with date and location). Public Health England is also currently running a scheme to investigate ticks – see below.

**DO NOT** squeeze the body of the tick, as this may cause the head and body to separate, leaving the head embedded in your skin.

**DO NOT** use your fingernails to remove a tick. Infection can enter via any breaks in your skin, e.g. close to the fingernail.

### Latest News

NorthTick project newsletter

Research workshop summary

HPRU EZI Workshop

TBE has arrived in the UK

SMC briefing risks fomenting discord

LDA starts work on specialist clinic

Press release – Lyme disease clinic

Lottery of care

### Be Aware!

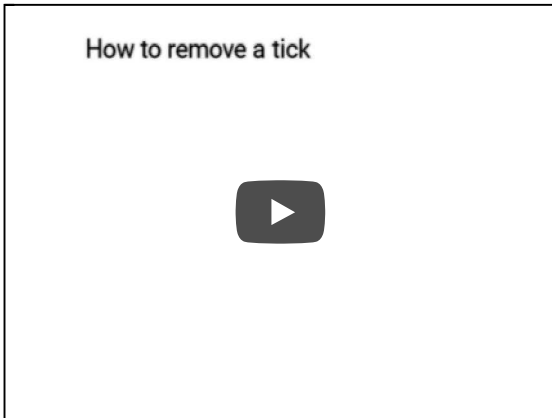
The tick that generally bites humans can be as small as a poppy seed or full stop on this page. Small children are generally bitten above the waist—check their hairline and scalp. Do NOT use eyebrow tweezers to remove a tick as this may squash it. Use a proper [tick removal](#) tool.

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**DO NOT** crush the tick's body, as this may cause it to regurgitate its infected stomach contents into the bite wound. See [this graphic animation](#) of what can happen, courtesy of the Lyme Borreliosis Foundation, Hungary.

**DO NOT** try to burn the tick off, apply petroleum jelly, nail polish or any other chemical. Any of these methods can cause discomfort to the tick, resulting in regurgitation, or saliva release.



Note that the video shows the tool being twisted according to the manufacturer's instructions. If fine tweezers are used, the tick should be pulled steadily upwards without twisting.

#### Disposing of the tick

After you have removed your tick, keep it in a sealed container and send it to Public Health England's [Tick Recording Scheme](#). They will identify it for you and add the information to their database.

Alternatively, kill the tick by crushing it and flushing it down the toilet, or by folding it in a strip of sticky tape and placing it in the waste. Be aware that engorged ticks will contain potentially infected blood, which may splatter when crushed. Do not crush the tick with your fingers and do not allow the crushed tick or the blood it carried to contact your skin.

#### Now what?!

Don't worry! The risk from a UK tick bite is very small and you don't need treatment unless you develop symptoms of illness. The red mark left by the tick bite will fade over a couple of days, so perhaps just make a note on a calendar or diary so if necessary you can tell your doctor when the tick bite was and where it was on your body. Lyme disease symptoms appear on average about 2 weeks after the tick bite.

If you have left a small part of the tick mouthparts in your skin, which can sometimes happen, medical advice is just to leave it and your body will deal with it. You can do more damage digging around with a needle to try to get it out, and this can be particularly distressing for children.