



## What do I do if I am bitten or scratched by an animal?

- If the animal is owned by another person, obtain the owner's contact information (e.g. name, address, phone number), so the animal can be located by Public Health Inspectors
- Wash the area thoroughly with soap and water
- Call your family doctor or seek medical attention immediately
- Report the bite or scratch to the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit at 519-426-6170 or 905-318-6623.

## What is the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit's role when an animal bites a human?

- When notified of a biting incident, health inspectors investigate to determine if there is a risk of rabies exposure. When the animal involved is known, the inspector will place the animal under observation for at least 10 days to ensure it doesn't show any signs of rabies.
- When the animal involved is not known, the inspector will work with the victim and his/her physician to ensure proper post-exposure care. This often includes vaccination that is given to protect them from the rabies virus.
- If the animal involved in the biting incident has since died, the inspector will request that the animal undergo testing for the rabies virus to ensure the safety of the victim.



## Rabies Bites!

Rabies is a very serious viral disease which attacks the central nervous system of warm-blooded animals, including humans. Rabid animals don't behave normally. Often they become aggressive or appear depressed. In Ontario, the animals that most often transmit rabies are bats, skunks, livestock, foxes, cats and other wildlife.

### How do I get rabies?

You can get the virus when exposed to the saliva of an infected animal. For example, if you are bitten or scratched, or if the animal licks your eyes, nose, or mouth.

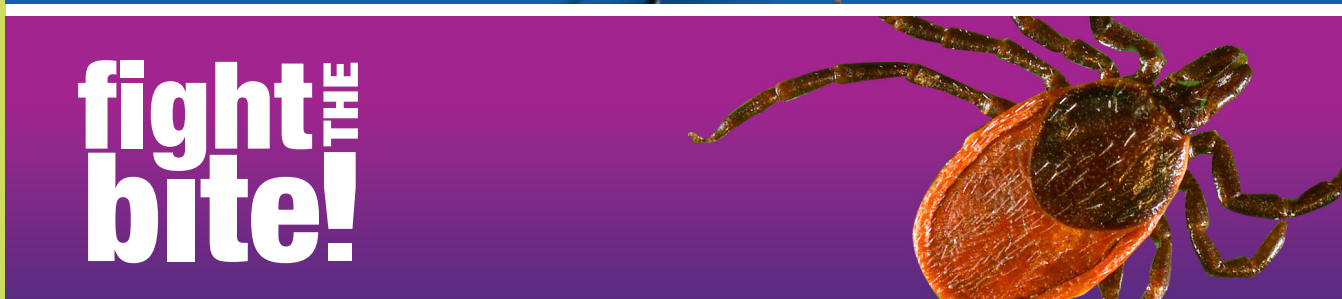
### How do I protect myself from rabies?

- Have your pet continually immunized against rabies
- Don't approach or touch stray animals, even if they seem friendly
- Don't touch sick or injured animals
- Don't feed wild or stray animals

### How can I protect my pet from rabies?

The most important thing you can do to protect your pet is to have it vaccinated. All pets over the age of three months must be immunized against rabies. It's the law, and failure to vaccinate your pet can result in a fine of \$90 per day.

Keep your pets under control. Don't let them run free, especially at night. Protect your pets from contact with wildlife.



**fight** THE  
**bite!**

For more information on Rabies, Lyme disease or West Nile Virus, visit [www.hnhu.org](http://www.hnhu.org).

**Health and  
Social Services**  
Haldimand and Norfolk

[www.hnhss.ca](http://www.hnhss.ca)

519-426-6170 • 905-318-6623 • 519-582-3579



Updated January 2021

**fight** THE  
**bite!**

**Protection against  
Rabies, Lyme Disease  
and West Nile Virus**

**Health and  
Social Services**  
Haldimand and Norfolk

# Lyme Disease



## Lyme disease

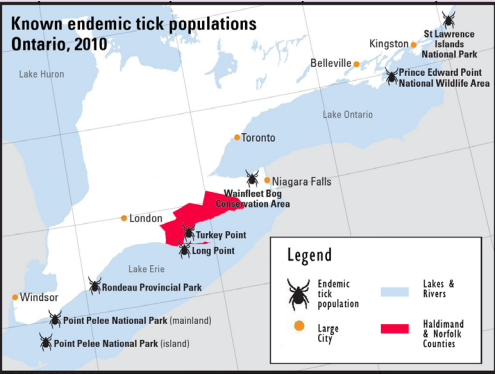
Lyme disease is an infection caused by the bacteria *Borrelia burgdorferi*. In Ontario, these bacteria are spread by the bite of black-legged ticks.

## What are the symptoms?

A circular rash referred to as a “bull’s-eye” rash could be one of the earliest symptoms of an infection. If you develop a “bull’s-eye” rash, fever, chills or extreme fatigue or feel like you have the flu, it’s important to seek medical attention and, if known, to tell your doctor when and where you were bitten. Lyme disease can have serious health consequences if left untreated.

## Are there ticks in Haldimand and Norfolk Counties?

The ticks that carry Lyme disease are commonly found in certain areas in and around Haldimand and Norfolk Counties. Locations with established blacklegged tick populations infected with the Lyme disease agent include: Long Point, Turkey Point, Wainfleet Bog Conservation Area, Rondeau Provincial Park, Point Pelee National Park, Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area, and the St. Lawrence Islands National Park area. However, while the potential is low, because ticks feed on migratory birds it is possible for people to encounter blacklegged ticks almost anywhere in the province.



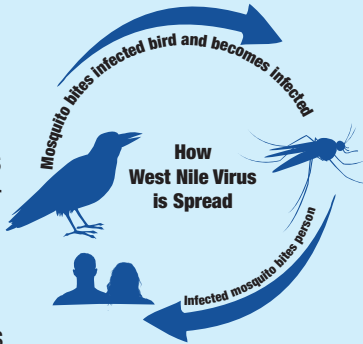
# West Nile Virus



West Nile Virus is a virus mainly transmitted to people through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes transmit the virus after becoming infected by feeding on the blood of birds that carry the virus.

## What are the symptoms?

Most people who are infected with the virus show no symptoms or they experience mild flu-like symptoms, such as fever, headache, body aches or fatigue. The symptoms usually last for a few days. Call your doctor immediately if you notice any symptoms.



## Did you know?

If you find a dead bird, **you no longer need to call the Health Unit**. Using a shovel, double-bag the bird and put it out with your garbage or bury it at least two feet deep in your yard. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.

When outdoors, use an insect repellent according to manufacturers’ instructions.

## Amount of DEET recommended for children & adults

Age group	Suggested % of DEET	Recommended number of applications per day
Newborn to 6 months	DEET is not recommended for this age group. Use netting or limit time outdoors at dusk and dawn to prevent mosquito bites.	
6 months to 2 years	10% or less	Not more than 1 (do not apply to hands or face)
2 years to 12 years	10% or less	Not more than 3
>12 years	Up to 30%	Follow instructions on label



## Fact

Rabid animals may be found in Haldimand and Norfolk Counties.

By law, pets over the age of 3 months must be vaccinated regularly against rabies.

Any animal bite should be reported to the Health Unit. Doctors who treat your injury must report the incident to the Health Unit.

If untreated, rabies infection is almost always fatal in animals and humans.

## Act!

Stay away from wild animals and animals acting strangely.


Vaccines need to be updated every 1-3 years. Contact your veterinarian for more information about vaccination. You can be fined if your pet is not up-to-date with rabies vaccination.

The Health Unit will investigate to assess the risk of rabies. They will place the animal under observation for 10 days to ensure it is rabies-free, and can issue treatment for the person bitten if a physician recommends it.

Following a bite or incident, wash the affected area thoroughly with soap and water and contact a health care professional immediately. Get treatment as quickly as possible to prevent the chance of rabies infection.



## Fact

Ticks are tiny! Before they feed, they are the size of a sesame seed. Tick at actual size  3-5 mm

Ticks can’t jump or fly. They prefer wooded and bushy areas with high grass and plenty of leaves on the ground. They wait on low vegetation and then attach to hosts.

Hungry ticks can be deterred!

The longer a tick is attached to your body, the higher the risk of infection with Lyme disease. If a tick is attached to your skin for less than 24 hours, your chance of getting Lyme disease is small.

The Health Unit can submit ticks for lab testing to determine if they carry the Lyme disease bacteria.

## Act!

- Wear light-coloured clothing. This makes it easier to find ticks on your body.
- Cover up with long-sleeved shirts and long pants. Tuck your pants into your socks.

When hiking, stay on the path and avoid contact with overgrown brush, vegetation and leaf litter. After time outdoors, carefully check your clothing and entire body for ticks.

When outdoors, use an insect repellent containing DEET. Eucalyptus plant compounds and soybean oil are additional options. Always apply according to manufacturers’ instructions.

If you find a tick on your body:

- Use fine-pointed tweezers to grab the tick’s head and mouth parts as close to your skin as possible
- Pull slowly. Do not twist or rotate the tick and try not to damage it
- Place the tick in a plastic container or bag so the Health Unit can test it
- Thoroughly wash the area where you were bitten with soap and water

After removing a tick from your body, if you think the tick may be a blacklegged tick, drop the tick off at the Simcoe or Caledonia Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit office.



## Fact

Only female mosquitoes bite. They are attracted to dark colours and to carbon dioxide released in your breath.

Hungry mosquitoes can be deterred!

Mosquitoes can sneak into your house!

Mosquitoes lay their eggs in still water. As adults, they usually stay within 2 km of where they were hatched.

## Act!

When outdoors, wear:

- Long-sleeved shirts and long pants
- Light-coloured clothing
- Tightly woven clothing

When outdoors, use an insect repellent containing DEET. Eucalyptus plant compounds and soybean oil are other options. Always apply according to manufacturers’ instructions.

Don’t leave unscreened doors and windows open, especially in the evening when mosquitoes are most active. Make sure your screens are in good repair with no gaps or holes.

Promptly eliminate standing water on your property to reduce mosquito breeding sites – including water in eaves troughs or shallow containers such as bird baths, spare tires and flower pots. This will protect you and your neighbours.

If you think you may have any of the illnesses above, or have been bitten by an animal, contact your doctor immediately and inform the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit at 519-426-6170 or 905-318-6623.