



# KILLINGWORTH HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### Spring has Sprung and so have the Ticks

Spring is here, we think, and so are the ticks!

Ticks spread Lyme disease, and other infections, and Killingworth residents are urged to take precautions when working in their yards, heading out to a park, or taking a hike.

Ticks grasp passing hosts from leaf litter, tips of grass, and shrubbery. Most ticks are probably picked up on the lower legs and then crawl up the body to find a place to feed. Adult ticks will look for a host in the shrub layer several feet above the ground, about or above the height of children. Tick nymphs (the stage before they become adult ticks) are small and often overlooked or mistaken for freckles. Peak months for acquiring infection in CT are May through July.

There are simple, effective steps that can be taken to help prevent tick bites and tick-borne diseases. Personal protection measures and conducting tick checks remain the most effective ways to reduce the risk of tick-borne disease.

#### Here are some tips to protect yourself:

- ✓ Avoid tall grass and over-grown, brushy areas.
- ✓ When hiking in wooded areas, stay in the middle of trails.
- ✓ Consider using insect repellent, according to manufacturer's instructions. Shoes and clothes can also be treated.
- ✓ If you are walking in grassy or wooded areas, tuck your pant leg into your socks, wear long-sleeved shirts, and closed shoes so your skin is not exposed.
- ✓ Wear light-colored clothing to make it easier to see the ticks for removal.
- ✓ Treat your pet with veterinarian-recommended products
- ✓ When returning indoors, shower using a washcloth or puff to remove any unattached ticks.
- ✓ Examine yourself, children, and pets for ticks when returning indoors.

For more information about ticks and tick-borne diseases, including submittal of engorged ticks for Lyme disease testing, contact the Killingworth Health Department at (860) 663-1765, x223 or visit the CT Department of Public Health website at <http://www.portal.ct.gov/DPH/Infectious-Diseases/EEI/Epidemiology-and-Emerging-Infections-Program> or call (860) 509-7994.

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