



Renfrew County and District Health Unit
"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

For Immediate Release

(Pembroke, Ontario, June 10, 2026)

Ticks are Active: Know the Risks and Protect Yourself from Tick Bites

With warmer weather, tick activity increases. People who spend time outdoors should take steps to avoid tick bites.

Many parts of Renfrew County and District (RCD) are suitable habitat for blacklegged ticks, also called deer ticks. These ticks can spread Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses to people. Lyme disease is the most common tick-borne disease. In 2025, RCD recorded 79 cases of Lyme disease, the highest annual count on record. The local rate has been above the provincial average every year since 2020, and more than three times the provincial average for the past two years.

Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) continues to monitor ticks to help identify areas where infected blacklegged ticks are more likely to be found. The area where these ticks are established has been expanding each year, spreading northwest along the Ottawa River. Current risk areas include communities along the Ottawa River from Arnprior to Chalk River, as well as Calabogie and Eganville. Because their range is still expanding, ticks can also be found in wooded or grassy areas outside these communities, so take precautions wherever you spend time outdoors. This northward spread is consistent with a broader, climate-driven expansion of blacklegged ticks across Ontario and eastern Canada.

An infected blacklegged tick usually needs to be attached for at least 24 hours before it can transmit Lyme disease, so removing a tick promptly reduces your risk. Signs and symptoms can appear between 3 and 30 days after a bite from an infected tick and can be different from person to person.

Common symptoms include:

- an expanding rash, usually at the site of the bite, that may or may not form a bull's-eye pattern
- chills
- fever
- headache
- joint and muscle pain
- fatigue

If you develop these symptoms, see your healthcare provider promptly and let them know you may have been exposed to ticks. Lyme disease can be treated effectively, especially when caught early.

You can lower your risk of tick bites by:

- wearing light-coloured clothing so ticks are easier to see
- wearing closed-toe shoes and socks, a long-sleeved shirt, and long pants tucked into your socks
- using insect repellent that contains DEET or Icaridin and following the label directions
- checking your body for ticks after being outdoors - learn how to do a tick check or remove a tick by visiting [Tick-borne diseases](#)
- drying your clothes on high heat for at least 10 minutes to kill ticks (use hot water if you wash them first)
- taking a shower after being in forested or grassy areas to remove ticks
- contacting your healthcare provider or a pharmacist if you are concerned about a tick bite, especially if the tick was attached for 24 hours or more; preventive treatment may be recommended

If you find a tick, you can submit it to RCDHU for identification or use the online service called [eTick.ca](#) – a public website that helps identify ticks from photos and supports tick monitoring in Canada.

For more information, visit <https://www.rcdhu.com/healthy-living/diseases/> or contact a Public Health Inspector at environmentalhealth@rcdhu.com or 613-732-3629 extension 505.

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Renfrew County and District Health Unit
Fax: 613-735-3067
media@rcdhu.com
www.rcdhu.com