

DEER TICK LIFE CYCLE

THREE HOSTS OVER TWO YEARS

The deer tick (*Ixodes scapularis*) has a two-year life cycle and requires three blood meals. It may become infected during one of these feedings and can pass the infection on during future feedings.

YEAR 1

SPRING

EGGS

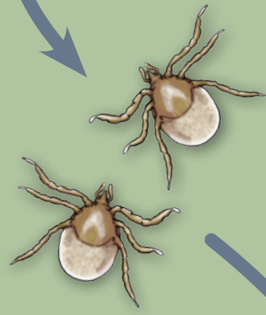


LIKELY HOSTS

SUMMER

Larvae feed on small animals and may become infected.

LARVAE



AUTUMN

Larvae develop into nymphs.

NYMPHS



HOST 1

WINTER

Nymphs are dormant.

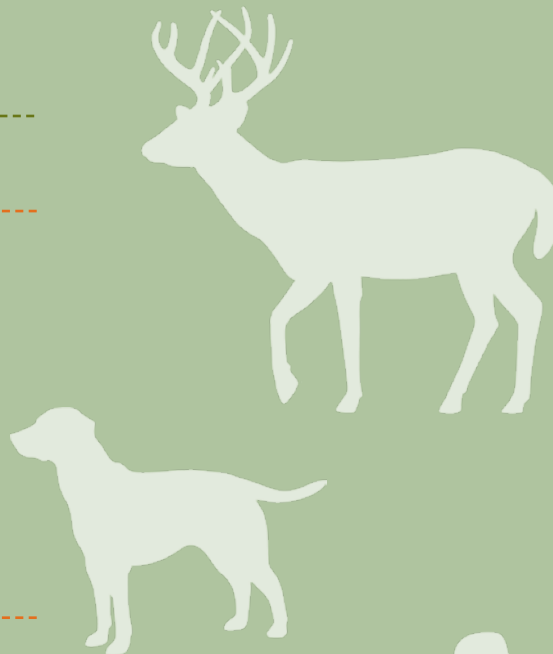


YEAR 2

SPRING

Greatest risk of infection is in spring and summer.

NYMPHS

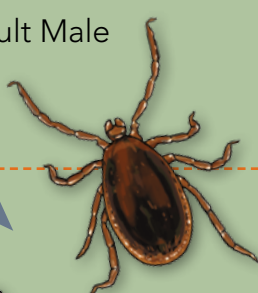


SUMMER

Nymphs feed on animals or humans and may transmit disease.

ADULTS

Adult Male



Adult Female



AUTUMN

Nymphs develop into adults. Females seek a third host. Adults feed on animals or humans and may transmit disease.

Engorged Female

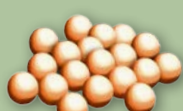


WINTER

SPRING

Females lay eggs.

EGGS



DEER TICK Q & A

HOW DO TICKS FIND A HOST?

Ticks can't fly or jump but do crawl. They use a behavior called questing to help them find a host. Questing is when a tick climbs to the edge of a plant and waits with its front legs stretched out. When a potential host walks by and brushes against the plant the tick climbs on.

HOW DO TICKS SPREAD DISEASE?

Ticks use their specialized mouth-parts to feed on blood from hosts. If a host has certain bacteria or viruses in its blood, the tick ingests these pathogens while feeding. The tick can then transmit them to a new host through saliva during its next meal.

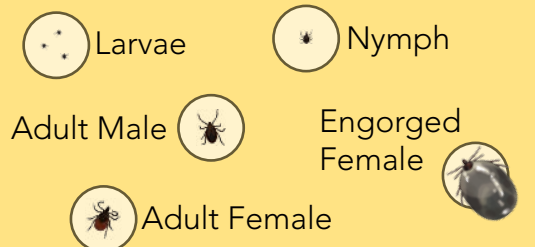
While you can get a tick bite at any time of the year, you are at the greatest risk of infection during the spring and fall.

If a tick bites you, remove it as soon as possible with tweezers or a specialized tick remover tool.

PETS AND TICKS

Pets may pick up ticks from brushing against plants. Check your pets before they enter your car or home.

ACTUAL SIZE OF DEER TICKS



More information on ticks and tick-borne illnesses is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/ticks