



635 North Erie Street  
 Toledo, Ohio 43604-5317  
 419.213.4100  
 419.213.4017 Fax  
 boardofhealth@co.lucas.oh.us



Karim Baroudi, MPH, REHS  
 Health Commissioner

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Contact: Heather Burnette, PIO  
 (419) 309-0153

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**Fight the Bite: Mosquito and Tick Season**

*Take Precautions to Prevent Mosquito-Borne and Tick-Borne Diseases*

With the arrival of mosquito and tick season in Northwest Ohio, the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department reminds the community to take precautions preventing both mosquito and tick bites, which in turn could lead to diseases such as West Nile virus and Lyme disease. In Ohio, ticks are usually active April through September, while mosquitoes are active May through October.

**Mosquitoes**

The most effective way to protect against mosquito-borne diseases is through the prevention of being bit. In Ohio, mosquito-borne illnesses are most often transmitted during the warmest months, May through October.

Being aware of mosquito and mosquito-borne disease activity allows you to take action to protect yourself and others: **avoid** mosquitoes and mosquito bites, **plan** ahead for mosquitoes while traveling and **stop** mosquitoes from breeding in and around your home.

Mosquitoes can live indoors and outdoors, and some species bite during the day while others bite at dusk and dawn. Below are various ways to avoid mosquito bites and prevent mosquito-borne diseases:

- If you are outdoors when mosquitoes are most active, be sure to wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, shoes and socks.
- Wear light-colored clothing, which is less attractive to mosquitoes.
- Use EPA-registered mosquito repellent and follow the label directions.
- Wear clothing and gear treated with permethrin, an insecticide (do not apply permethrin directly to skin).
- Use mosquito netting when sleeping outdoors or in an unscreened structure.

**Plan ahead for mosquitoes when traveling:**

- Check travel notices on [CDC's Travelers' Health website](https://www.cdc.gov/travel) for mosquito-borne and other disease transmission updates for the country(ies) you are visiting.
- Speak to your health care provider about your travel plan. You may need malaria prophylaxis or yellow fever vaccination, depending on your destination.



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Below are tips to eliminate mosquito breeding sites around your home:

- Eliminate standing water.
- Empty or remove water-holding containers, such as buckets, unused flower pots and bird baths.
- Make sure all roof gutters are clean and draining properly.
- Keep child wading pools empty and on their sides when not being used.
- Install or repair screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out of your home.
- Change water in pet dishes frequently.

## Ticks

There are about a dozen species of ticks identified in Ohio. However, most species are associated with wild animals and are rarely encountered by people. Three species, the American dog tick, the blacklegged tick and the lone star tick, are among the most likely ticks to be encountered by people or pets.

“If you find a tick attached to your body, promptly remove it and watch for a fever, rash, fatigue, muscle or joint aches. Those are the most common symptoms of a tick-borne infection,” said Health Commissioner, Karim Baroudi. “If you experience any of these symptoms, contact your health care provider.”

Ways to avoid tick bites and prevent tick-borne diseases:

- Avoid direct contact with ticks, stay away from wooded, bushy areas with high grass and leaf litter. Walk in the center of trails.
- Wear clothing and gear treated with permethrin insecticide (do not apply permethrin directly to skin).
- Use EPA-registered tick repellent and follow the label directions.

Checking for ticks and removal:

- Bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors (within 2 hours) to more easily find and wash off any ticks that may be on you.
- Conduct a full-body tick check using a hand-held mirror to view all parts of your body upon return from a tick infested area.
- Examine gear and pets.
- After you come indoors, tumble dry clothes on high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks on dry clothing.
- Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.



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- Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Do not twist or jerk the tick, which can cause the mouth parts to break off and remain in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth parts with tweezers. If you are unable to remove the mouth easily, leave it alone and let the skin heal.
- After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub or soap and water.
- Dispose of a live tick by submersing it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed bag/container, wrapping it tightly in tape or flushing it down the toilet. Never crush a tick with your fingers.
- Avoid folklore remedies such as "painting" a tick with nail polish, petroleum jelly, or using heat to make the tick detach from your skin.

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