

How to protect yourself



Protect your body

Use insect repellent registered with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Wear long, loose-fitting pants and long-sleeved shirts. Avoid ticks by staying away from wooded, brushy, or grassy areas.



Protect your clothing and gear

Treat clothing and gear with a product containing 0.5% permethrin.



Protect your home and yard

Remove standing water around the home once a week. Use screens on windows and doors or air conditioning to keep mosquitoes outside. Remove leaf litter and clear tall grasses and brush to reduce tick habitats.

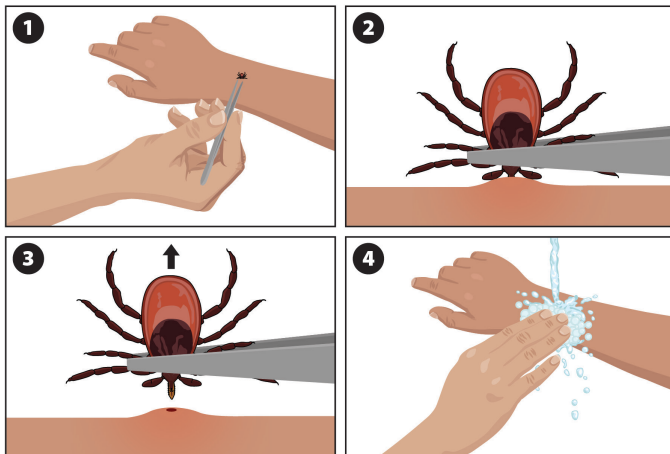


Check for ticks

Check your clothing, body, and pets for ticks. Shower after being outside to help remove unattached ticks.

Remove attached ticks as soon as possible

Do not wait to go to a healthcare provider to remove a tick. You can be infected with a virus within 15 minutes after a bite from an infected tick. See a healthcare provider if you develop a rash or fever within several weeks of a tick bite.



Do you have a weakened immune system?



You're at **higher risk of severe illness** from viruses spread by **mosquitoes and ticks**.



VI Express Template



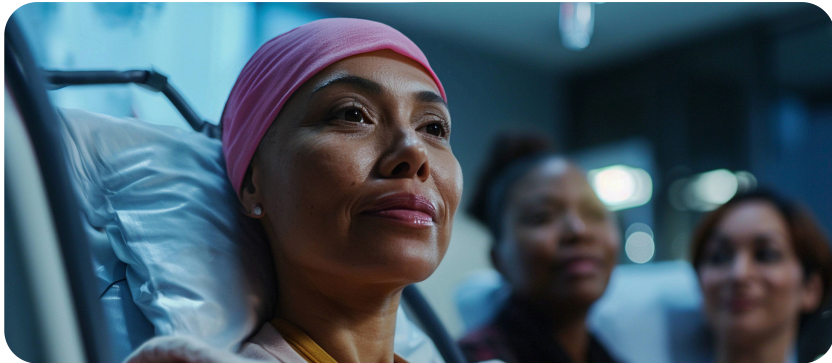
Learn more about your risk.

Why it matters

In the United States, mosquitoes and ticks can spread viruses like West Nile, Powassan, eastern equine encephalitis, and more.

If infected, some people develop severe illness that can include:

- Inflammation of the brain (encephalitis)
- Inflammation of the membranes around the brain and spinal cord (meningitis)
- Infection of the spinal cord causing weakness or paralysis



Higher risk with a weakened immune system

A **medical condition** or **medication** can weaken your immune system.

People take medications that weaken the immune system for many different reasons, including:

- Treating certain cancers, like lymphoma and leukemia
- Treating autoimmune and inflammatory diseases like rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, or multiple sclerosis
- Preventing rejection of transplanted organs

Immunosuppressive medicines and antibody therapies like rituximab, ocrelizumab, and ofatumumab are important for treating some medical conditions, but they can also increase your risk of severe illness and death from viruses spread by mosquitoes and ticks.

Effects of some medications can last 6-12 months, so your immune system could still be weakened after you stop taking the medication.

What to do if you get sick

People with a weakened immune system might respond differently after being bitten by an infected mosquito or tick. Some people have mild symptoms for weeks or months before developing severe illness.



Watch for symptoms

See your healthcare provider if you have persistent headaches, fever, body aches, unusual weakness, confusion, or changes in your behavior.



Talk to your provider

Tell your healthcare provider about any travel or exposure to mosquitoes or ticks. Remind them of any medical conditions you have or medications you take.



Continue your medication

Do not stop taking your medication unless you are told to do so by your healthcare provider.

Your healthcare provider can order tests to determine if you are sick with a virus spread by mosquitoes or ticks.

No treatments are available.

Unfortunately, no specific medicines are available to prevent or treat illnesses caused by viruses spread by mosquitoes and ticks in the United States. With no treatments available, it is especially important to prevent mosquito and tick bites.

Planning travel?

Vaccines are available to prevent illness from a few viruses that spread outside the United States, if recommended for you by your healthcare provider.