

Tips to Avoid Ticks When Outside

(Nebraska Radio Network)-- With summer here, we are spending a lot of time outdoors which may expose you to a tiny insect that could mean big trouble.

Epidemiologist Patty Quinlisk says ticks are very active during the summer months and carry several diseases -- the most common is Lyme disease. Quinlisk says it's fairly easy to prevent bites if you keep your skin covered in areas where ticks may be crawling. Quinlisk suggests you wear long sleeves, long pants and a hat to avoid ticks, in addition to spraying on insect repellent that contains the chemical DEET.

Transmission of disease by a tick is relatively rare, but 25 to 30 people in Nebraska each year are confirmed with cases of Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever.

If you find one of the insects has latched onto your body, Quinlisk says you should remove it right away to prevent exposure to any of several diseases. Don't squeeze, burn or suffocate the tick. Grab it with fingernails or tweezers as close to your body as possible to get right down to the head of the tick and pull it straight out.

Even avoiding woody and grassy areas does not guarantee you will be safe from bites.

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