

## Tick Awareness

Deer ticks, also known as black-legged ticks, can transmit Lyme and other diseases. At Flying Deer Nature Center, we use great care in preventing and responding to tick bites. Awareness skills have always been a big part of the FDNC curriculum, and increasing our awareness of ticks increases our awareness of both our bodies and what's happening on the earth. Please read the information below to better understand how to protect your camper from tick bites, and write or speak with us if you have any questions.

## What We Do

- We educate all our instructors and counselors about tick-borne diseases and safe tick removal, and they carry tick-removal devices with them at all times. Instructors also carry a repellent that has been proven effective in repelling ticks.
- During camp orientations, we educate campers about ticks, tick-borne diseases, tick checks, and tick removal. For day camps, we remind children daily to do tick checks immediately following camp.
- During the camp day, we do simple tick checks (campers look at their own legs and arms and each other's backs and necks) at least once a day.
- If a child finds that they have been bitten by a tick, a staff person will remove it.
- During overnight camps, we require frequent tick checks for campers. We recommend that campers wear bathing suits under their clothes for water play and in order to facilitate checking for ticks. We have private tick-check stations with mirrors at each group's campsite. Bathing suits facilitate campers' ability to check one another's backs, stomachs, and legs, but campers must know how to check themselves for ticks as well. **Please teach your child how to do this before he or she attends camp.** We will also ask campers to keep a set of clothes for sleeping and to keep their day clothes outside of their tents in order to ensure that ticks do not travel into their tents and sleeping bags via clothing.

## What You Can Do

**Tick checks.** As soon as possible after every day of day camp, your child should do a tick check, ideally with a parent's help. Ticks often end up on the backs of knees, waistline, groin, and armpits. But look everywhere, including the hair! They can be smaller than the period at the end of this sentence, but are often much bigger. **We strongly recommend tick checks right after camp and in the morning before camp.**

**Treat clothing with tick repellent.** For day or overnight camps, you may choose to treat clothing with tick repellent that includes permethrin and/or purchase clothes with a tight weave to prevent tick penetration. Products are listed later in this document.

**Apply repellent.** You may choose a DEET-based repellent or an herbal repellent. When applying a repellent against ticks, follow the directions on the product and give particular attention to the shoe tops, socks, and lower portion of pants. **If you use a DEET-based repellent, please apply before arriving for camp, not in the parking lot.** Herbal

repellants do not last as long, so if you choose to use one, please put it in your child's bag so that we can reapply at lunchtime. Suggested products are listed on the last page.

**Tick removal.** If you find a tick, use a tick remover especially designed for this purpose (these are available in drugstores and outdoor-supply stores) or very fine tweezers. Grasp the tick as close to its head (as close to your skin) as possible. Slowly pull straight out, trying not to damage the tick body. Disinfect the bite and wash your hands.

**Rolling a lint roller** over your child's skin may pick up ticks that are not attached yet.

**Clothing care:** After coming home from camp, your child should put their clothes immediately in the washing machine or in an isolated area so that ticks that may be on clothing do not crawl off into the house or onto people. You can also put the clothing in a hot dryer for 30–40 minutes, which will kill ticks. You may choose to check your child's bedding for ticks that may have found their way there.

**Have your child wear light-colored clothing with long pants tucked into socks.**

This makes ticks easier to detect and keep them on the outside of the clothes.

**Tick Testing:** If you do find a tick on yourself or your child, one option is to have the tick tested for Lyme or other tick-borne diseases at a lab such as the following:

- TickReport: <https://www.tickreport.com>
- Clongen Laboratories: <https://www.clongen.com/clinical-diagnostics-services/tick-testing-order-forms/>

## **Products**

- **Clothing:** Clothing pre-treated with the insect repellent Permethrin is available, as are Permethrin sprays to treat clothing. Permethrin is a man-made version of a natural insect repellent found in certain chrysanthemum plants. Brands include Sawyer's Clothing Insect Repellent, Duranon Tick Repellent, Repel Permanone, Cutter Outdoorsman Gear Guard, Sawyer's Permethrin Tick Repellent, 3M Clothing and Gear Insect Repellent, and No Stinkin' Ticks. Treating clothing with these repellants has been shown to be highly effective in reducing tick bites in outdoor workers. Give particular attention to shoes, socks, and pants (but be sure to apply to arms, legs, etc.). These sprays can be found at local outdoor sports shops (Dick's Sporting Goods, etc.). Chemical-free clothing such as Rynoskin™, a tight-weave long underwear-type clothing, may also provide protection.
- **Herbal Repellents:** Repel Plant-Based Lemon Eucalyptus and Natrapel 8-Hour with picaridin have been shown to keep ticks away for up to 7 hours.
- **Chemical Repellents:** Chemical repellents found to be most effective (keeping ticks away up to 7 hours) include Off Deep Woods Sportsmen II; Cutter Backwoods Unscented; Off FamilyCare Smooth & Dry; and 3M Ultrathon Insect Repellent 8. **Note that a concentration of DEET of up to 30% for adults and children over 2 years of age is the maximum concentration recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.** If using DEET, apply this before arriving for camp and not in the parking lot.