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the ways ticks can access your body. Skin based repellents like DEET, picaridin, IR3535, and oil of lemon-eucalyptus can help.”

“People can treat their clothes with permethrin, which will actually kill ticks that get onto you,” Larson added. “It is an insecticide, though, and shouldn’t be placed on the skin. Tick checks after being outside are essential. Check your hair, ears, neck, armpits, belly button, groin, knee pits, and ankles to see if ticks are crawling on you or have bitten you.”

It is also suggested to stay on cleared, well-traveled trails and avoid dense woods and bushy areas. Shower or bathe as soon as possible after returning indoors as a way to wash off and more easily find ticks that may be on you. For those with pets, consult a veterinarian on products to control ticks on cats and dogs.

When removing a tick from the skin, health experts say that removing the mouth of the tick is critical in preventing any diseases from possibly spreading to you.

According to the UK Entomology website, a feeding tick holds itself in place with its barbed mouth-parts and a type of glue. To remove a tick from the skin, it should be grasped with fine-point tweezers as close to the skin as possible. The tick should then be pulled out in a gentle but firm manner. The tick should not be twisted or jerked during removal. Afterwards, both the bite area and hands should be washed thoroughly with soap and water. An antiseptic should be applied to the bite site.

For more information about ticks and disease in Kentucky, visit the UK Entomology and the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife websites.



This is a female black-legged or deer tick. Its abdomen is engorged with a host blood meal.

PHOTO/Credit/CDC/Dr. Gary Alpert, Urban Pests/IPM

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