



## **What is a tick and where can you find them?**

A tick is a small, brown-black parasite that feeds on blood. Ticks can be found in forests, gardens, meadows, moors and even dunes. The tick is as large as a pinhead when it has not yet drunk any blood. When it has fed on blood, it becomes the size of a small pea.

A tick can often be found on the neck, under the armpits, in the backs of the knees, at the groin, near the hairline or on the ankles. Therefore, it is important to check yourself thoroughly when you have been outdoors. This is because a tick bite does not hurt. You don't always have to go to the doctor right away if you remove the tick correctly and have no symptoms. Preventive treatment with antibiotics is not necessary.

## **How to remove a tick?**

It is important to remove a tick as soon as possible (within 24 hours). Be careful not to flatten or otherwise manipulate the tick: this way you run the risk of contaminated saliva/stomach contents with bacteria entering the wound.

Make sure:

- you don't use alcohol, iodine, soap or ether on the tick
- not to burn the tick
- you grab the tick with a tick remover as close to the skin as possible (don't pinch the abdomen!)
- to pull the tick out of the skin gradually but firmly

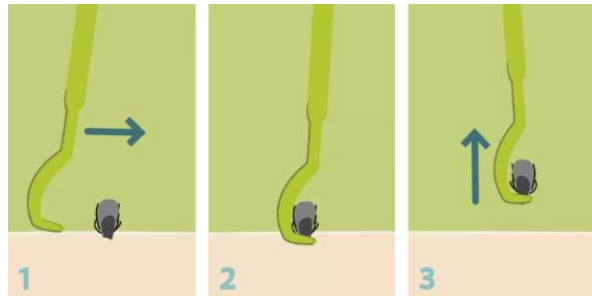
There are various tick removers, such as tweezers (use only one with a thin tip), a tick removal card, a tick-pickers crowbar or tick tweezers.

## **I have a tick, what should I do now?**

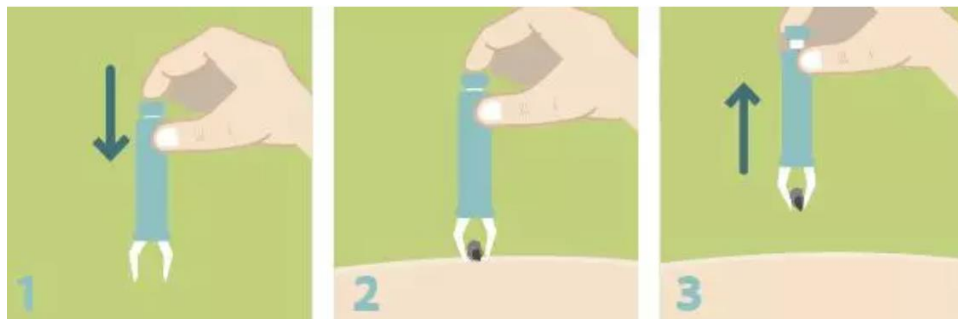
### Tick removal card



### Tick-pickers crowbar



### Tick tweezers

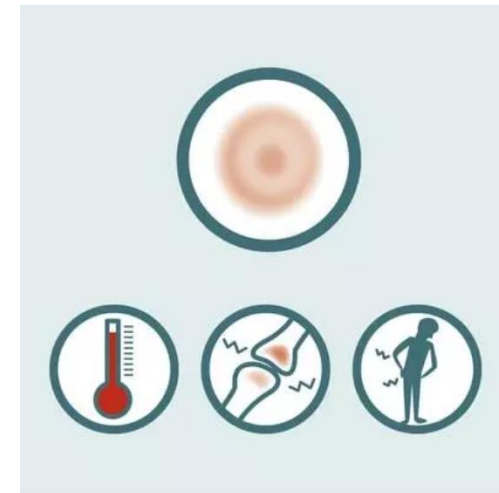


Clean the skin/wound afterwards and use a disinfectant. Don't worry if a piece of the tick is still in your skin. The bacterium can no longer be passed on.

### When should you see your doctor?

It is important to check your body every 2 days up to 2 months for a red circle that becomes bigger. This circle usually appears after a few days or weeks and may indicate Lyme disease. The circle often, but not always, appears at the site of the bite.

When you discover such a circle, it is best to see your doctor. He/she can treat you with antibiotics. Further, if you develop symptoms of illness such as fever, unexplained fatigue, muscle or joint pain, it is good to see your doctor.



There is no vaccine against Lyme disease, but you can be vaccinated against tick-borne encephalitis. Ask your doctor for more information, or visit [www.wanda.be](http://www.wanda.be).