



What to do if a tick bites you

Remove the tick calmly

- Grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible with a pair of sharp-tipped tweezers or the fingernails and pull it outward with a careful, steady movement until the tick detaches.
- Do not cover the tick with ointment or any similar substance. Doing so will make the tick vomit, increasing the risk of infection.
- Disinfect the area of the bite with an antiseptic.
- Record the date that the tick was removed in a calendar so you can use it later if needed.

Redness and itchiness at the location of the bite are common

- A hydrocortisone ointment can be used to relieve the itch.
- The redness and itch caused by irritation of the tissue will go away in a few days.

If the tick's feeding tube or part of the front of the body remains attached to the skin:

- **This does not increase the risk of disease** (e.g. Borreliosis/Lyme disease), and there is no need to forcibly remove parts of the tick that remain in the skin.

- You can disinfect the area daily and treat the redness with an antibacterial ointment. If the area becomes infected, contact a nurse or doctor.

A tick bite alone does not require antibiotics.

- The TBE virus, which causes tick-borne encephalitis, and is located in the mouth area of the tick, takes just a few minutes to enter the human body. **However, only about 1–2% of ticks in the high-risk area for the disease carry the TBE virus.** TBE is not treated with antibiotics.
- Borrelia bacteria, located in the intestinal system of the ticks, takes 1–2 days to get into the human body. For this reason, checking for ticks regularly is an effective way to prevent Borrelia infection.

Contact a doctor

- if the location of the bite has an expanding, often ring-shaped red area more than 5 cm. in diameter when more than a week has passed from the bite.
- if a lymphocytoma, a benign red or bluish soft growth forms at the location of the bite.
- if fever, headache or nausea occur 7–21 days after the tick bite.

Read more about protection on the THL website
thl.fi/tick-borne-encephalitis

Further information

[Read more about protection on the THL website](https://thl.fi/tick-borne-encephalitis)

Contact details

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