Michigan’s Five Most Common Ticks

Ticks are significant carriers of pathogens that cause human and animal disease. Listed here is a ranked order of the ticks most likely to bite humans in Michigan.

1. American dog tick (*Dermacentor variabilis*)
   - **Distribution:** Widespread throughout Michigan forests and grassy areas
   - **Key Facts:** These ticks are active from early May-November, and will bite both humans and companion animals.
   - **Diseases:** Diseases associated with the American dog tick are rare in Michigan, but may include Rocky Mountain spotted fever and tularemia.

2. Blacklegged tick (*Ixodes scapularis*)
   - **Distribution:** Emerging in Michigan, see map at right
   - **Key Facts:** Found on low forest vegetation, often along human and animal trails.
   - **Diseases:** Lyme disease is the most common tick-borne disease in Michigan. Other rare diseases include: anaplasmosis, babesiosis, deer-tick virus, and ehrlichiosis.

3. Lone star tick (*Amblyomma americanum*)
   - **Distribution:** Occasionally found in wooded and grassy areas across the state
   - **Key Facts:** An aggressive biter of humans and companion animals, adult females have distinctive “Lone Star” mark
   - **Diseases:** Ehrlichiosis, rocky mountain spotted fever, tularemia

4. Woodchuck tick (*Ixodes cookei*)
   - **Distribution:** Found most commonly on pets throughout Michigan
   - **Key Facts:** Usually found near dens of skunks and woodchucks, will bite companion animals near animal dens and occasionally humans
   - **Diseases:** Powassan encephalitis

5. Brown dog tick (*Rhipicephalus sanguineus*)
   - **Distribution:** Occasionally found in Michigan.
   - **Key Facts:** can uniquely survive and breed in indoor environments, has been associated with kennel, shelter, and breeding facilities. Good hygiene practices can prevent indoor infestations.
   - **Diseases:** Rocky mountain spotted fever, canine babesiosis, canine ehrlichiosis

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**Tick Bite and Tick-Borne Disease Prevention**

- Use insect repellents containing no more than 30 percent DEET.
- Use repellents that contain permethrin on clothing.
- After spending time outdoors, check your skin and clothes for ticks.
- See your healthcare provider if you have symptoms of fever, rash, body aches or fatigue.