



Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Bureau of Infectious Disease Prevention
Emerging & Zoonotic Infectious Disease Section
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INSTRUCTIONS FOR TICK SUBMISSION

NOTE: Effective April 1, 2020, MDHHS will not test ticks for evidence of infection with disease agents.

This kit provides you with an easy means of obtaining identification of a tick removed from a human, an animal, or the environment. Ticks may carry diseases (e.g., Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever) that cause illness in humans and animals in Michigan. Therefore, if you find a tick feeding on a person or pet, you may want it identified. Not all tick species carry disease agents of human public health importance.

Ticks should be carefully removed to avoid damaging the tick. If the tick is attached to a human or animal, use tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin surface as possible. Using steady, even pressure, pull the tick upwards. Do not twist or jerk the tick because this can cause the mouthparts to break off and remain in the skin. If the tick's mouthparts remain in the skin after removing the tick, do not dig for its mouthparts! After tick removal, apply basic first aid to the bite site and allow the area to heal by itself. Additional information about what to do after a tick bite can be found [here](#).

The **Tick Identification Form** is used to record ticks that are removed from a host (human/animal/other) and submitted to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) for identification. Please fill out this form completely when submitting a tick. We will use the information you provide to contact you with the results of the tick identification. **Please be aware that results may be delayed as we respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Beginning April 1, 2020, ticks submitted for identification through this program will not be tested for the presence of disease agents. This is because 1) even if a tick contains a disease agent, it does not mean you were infected by that agent and 2) negative results can be misleading because you may have been bitten by a tick you didn't notice. ***The results of any pathogen testing in ticks should not guide disease diagnoses and treatment.*** Talk with your healthcare provider if you have additional questions, or if you develop flu-like symptoms/rash within 30 days of a tick bite or visiting an area with ticks.

Follow the instructions below when submitting a tick with the Tick Submission Kit. Ticks may be alive or dead for identification.

1. Place the tick into the vial. Do not put air holes in the vial.
2. Screw the cap onto the vial securely, then place the vial into a plastic bag and seal the bag closed.
3. Fill out the top portion of the Tick Identification Form completely. You may choose to complete a PDF version on your computer, then print it out. The form is available online at: www.michigan.gov/documents/emergingdiseases/MDHHS_TSF_Web_549971_7.pdf
4. Place the form and the zipped bag inside the preaddressed mailing envelope. Include your return address on the envelope.
5. Mail by first class mail. **NOTE:** In 2019, US postage for the tick mailer was usually close to \$4.00. Make sure you have the proper postage, or the envelope may be returned to you for "postage due," resulting in a significant delay in tick identification.

If you have questions about tick submission, please contact the MDHHS Emerging & Zoonotic Infectious Disease Section at (517) 335-8165 or MDHHS-Bugs@michigan.gov. For more information about ticks and tick-borne disease in Michigan, go to www.michigan.gov/lyme.