

## **Prevent disease by removing ticks correctly**

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It's summer, people are out frolicking in the great outdoors in light clothing, providing ticks with a veritable all-you-can-eat buffet.

Given all the diseases ticks can carry, it is important to get rid of them.

Entomologist Bill Sciarappa, agricultural agent for the Monmouth County office of Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension, has had hundreds of ticks on him and is something of an expert on removing them.

Sciarappa says ticks can carry various diseases and can discharge the bacteria causing those diseases into the skin if suddenly assaulted with a hot match, say, or nail-polish remover — more old-fashioned, albeit sometimes moderately successful, methods of removal.

Following the suggestions proffered by the Centers for Disease Control, Sciarappa recommends removing embedded ticks with fine-tipped tweezers, grasping the tick firmly and as closely to the skin as possible, and, with a steady motion, pulling the tick's body away from the skin.

The tick's mouthparts may remain in the skin, he says, but this is not a cause for alarm. The bacteria that cause Lyme disease are contained in the tick's midgut or salivary glands. The area then should be cleaned with an antiseptic.

"Nothing beats prevention, though," Sciarappa says.

Wearing proper clothing and a daily tick check are helpful, he says.

Some other suggestions from the agency for prevention include wearing light-colored clothing so ticks are easier to see, long pants tucked into socks and wearing a tick repellent. Repellents are applied to clothing and/or skin.