



What do I do if I am bitten or scratched by an animal?

- Obtain the owner's contact information (e.g. name, address, phone number), so the animal can be located by Public Health and Emergency Services.
- Wash the area thoroughly with soap and water.
- Call your family doctor or seek medical attention immediately.
- Report the bite or scratch to Region of Waterloo Public Health and Emergency Services at 519-575-4400.

What is Region of Waterloo Public Health and Emergency Services' role when an animal bites a human?

When notified of a biting incident, Public Health Inspectors investigate to determine if there is a risk of rabies exposure. When the animal involved is known, the inspector will place the animal under observation for a period of 10 days after the date of biting to ensure rabies was not transmitted at the time of biting.

When the owner of the animal involved is not known or it is a wild animal, the inspector will work with the person exposed and physician to ensure proper post-exposure treatment is available which may include vaccine.

If the animal involved in the exposure incident has since died, the inspector will request that the animal undergo rabies testing.



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fight THE
bite!

For more information on Rabies, Lyme Disease or West Nile Virus, call **519-575-4400 (TTY 519-575-4608)** and speak to a Public Health Inspector, or visit www.regionofwaterloo.ca/ph

Alternate formats of this document are available upon request.



Protection against Rabies, Lyme Disease and West Nile Virus

Rabies bites!

Rabies is a **very** serious viral disease which attacks the central nervous system of warm-blooded animals, including humans. Rabid animals don't behave normally. Often they become aggressive or appear depressed. In Ontario, the animals that most often transmit rabies are bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes, livestock and other wildlife.

How do I get rabies?

You can get the virus when exposed to the saliva of an infected animal. For example, if you are bitten or scratched, or if the animal licks your eyes, nose, or mouth.

How do I protect myself from rabies?

- Have your pet continually immunized against rabies.
- Don't approach or touch unfamiliar animals, even if they seem friendly.
- Don't touch sick or injured animals.
- Do not feed wild or stray animals.
- Never handle a bat with your bare hands.

How can I protect my pet from rabies?

The most important thing you can do to protect your pet is to have it vaccinated. All pets over the age of three months must be immunized against rabies. It's the law and failure to vaccinate your pet can result in a fine of \$110 per day.

Keep your pets under control. Don't let your pets roam free, especially at night. Protect your pets from contact with wildlife.



Lyme Disease



In Ontario, Lyme Disease is caused by the bite of a Black-legged tick (aka deer tick or ixodes scapularis) that is infected with *Borrelia burgdorferi*.

What are the symptoms?

A circular rash referred to as a “bull’s-eye” rash could be one of the earliest symptoms of an infection. If you develop a “bull’s-eye” rash, fever, chills or extreme fatigue or feel like you have the flu, it’s important to seek medical attention and if known, to tell your doctor when and where you were bitten. Lyme disease can have serious health consequences if left untreated.



Are there ticks in Waterloo Region?

Black-legged ticks are spreading to new areas of the province because of climate change. They can also spread by travelling on migrating birds and deer.

While the probability is low, it is possible to find a black-legged tick almost anywhere in Ontario. Ticks are most active in Spring and Summer.



Known Black-Legged Tick Populations

Southern Ontario, 2022



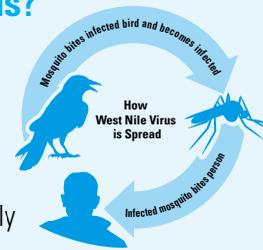
West Nile Virus



West Nile Virus (WNV) is a virus mainly transmitted to people through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes transmit the virus after becoming infected by feeding on the blood of birds that carry the virus.

What are the symptoms?

Most people who are infected with the virus show no symptoms or they experience mild flu-like symptoms, such as fever, headache, body aches or fatigue. The symptoms usually last for a few days. Call your doctor immediately if you notice any symptoms.



Did you know?

Icaridin (also known as picaridin) derived of natural materials, is the insect repellent that was approved for use by Health Canada in 2012. It is the repellent of choice by the Public Health Agency of Canada’s Canadian Advisory Committee on Tropical Medicine and Travel for children ages six months to 12 years of age. Products containing up to 20 per cent icaridin can be used for children in the same age group where 10 per cent of DEET is recommended.

When outdoors, use an insect repellent according to manufacturers’ instructions.

Amount of DEET recommended for children and adults

Age group	Suggested % of DEET	Recommended number of applications per day
Newborn to 6 months	DEET is not recommended for this age group. Use netting or limit time outdoors at dusk and dawn to prevent mosquito bites.	
6 months to 2 years	10% or less	Not more than 1 (do not apply to hands or face)
2 years to 12 years	10% or less	Not more than 3
> 12 years	Up to 30%	Follow instructions on label

Personal Insect repellents - Canada.ca



Fact

Rabid animals may be found in Waterloo Region.

Act!

Stay away from wild animals, unfamiliar animals and animals acting strangely.

By law, pets over the age of 3 months must be vaccinated regularly against rabies.

Vaccines need to be updated every 1 to 3 years. Contact your veterinarian for more information about vaccination. You can be fined if your pet is not up-to-date with rabies vaccination.

All animal bites should be reported to Public Health and Emergency Services. Physicians who treat your injury must report the incident to Public Health and Emergency Services.

Public Health Inspectors will investigate to assess the risk of rabies. They will place the animal under observation for 10 days to rule out rabies transmission, and can issue treatment for the person bitten if a physician recommends it.

If untreated, rabies infection is almost always fatal in animals and humans.

Wash the affected area thoroughly with soap and water and contact a health care professional immediately. Treatment should begin as quickly as possible to prevent the chance of rabies infection.



Fact

Ticks are tiny! Before they feed, they are the size of a sesame seed.

Act!

- Wear light-coloured clothing. This makes it easier to find ticks on your body
- Cover up with long-sleeved shirts and long pants. Tuck your pants into socks

Tick at actual size 3–5 mm

Ticks can’t jump or fly. They prefer wooded and bushy areas with high grass and plenty of leaves on the ground. They wait on low vegetation and then attach to hosts that pass by.

When hiking, stay on the path and avoid contact with overgrown brush, vegetation and leaf litter. After time outdoors, carefully check your clothing and entire body for ticks.

Hungry ticks can be deterred!

When outdoors, use an insect repellent containing DEET or Icaridin. Eucalyptus plant compounds and soybean oil are additional options. Always apply product according to manufacturers’ instructions.

The longer a tick is attached to your body, the higher the risk of infection with Lyme Disease. If a tick is attached to your skin for less than 24 hours, your chance of getting Lyme Disease is small.

- If you find a tick on your body:
- Use fine-pointed tweezers to grab the tick’s head and mouth parts as close to your skin as possible.
 - Pull slowly. Do not twist or rotate the tick try not to damage it.
 - Place the tick in a plastic container or bag. Upload a photo of the tick to etick.ca for quick identification. If identified as a blacklegged tick, speak with your healthcare provider to discuss next steps.
 - Thoroughly wash the area where you were bitten with soap and water.



Fact

Only female mosquitoes bite. They are attracted to dark colours and to carbon dioxide released in your breath.

Act!

- When outdoors, wear:
- long-sleeved shirts and long pants
 - light-coloured clothing
 - tightly woven clothing
 - hat and socks

Hungry mosquitoes can be deterred!

When outdoors, use an insect repellent containing Deet or Icaridin (children). Eucalyptus plant compounds and soybean oil are other options. Always apply product following manufacturers’ directions.

Mosquitoes can sneak into your house!

Don’t leave unscreened doors and windows open, especially in the evening when mosquitoes are most active. Make sure screens are in good repair with no gaps or holes.

Mosquitoes lay their eggs in still water. As adults, they usually stay within 2 km of where they were hatched.

Eliminate standing water on your property- including water in eaves troughs or shallow containers such as bird baths, pool covers and flower pot. This will protect you and your neighbours.

A licensed exterminator can apply environmentally-friendly chemicals to standing water to stop mosquito eggs from turning into biting adults.

Call Public Health and Emergency Services to report standing water at **519-575-4400**.

If you think you may have any of the illnesses above, or have been bitten by an animal, contact your doctor immediately and inform Public Health and Emergency Services at **519-575-4400**.