



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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Preventing Ticks in the Yard

Apply Pesticides Outdoors to Control Ticks

Pesticides for ticks, known as acaricides, can reduce the number of ticks in your yard. These benefits have been best-studied for *Ixodes scapularis* (the black-legged tick), and include:


- Consistent and timely pest control
- Easy to apply
- Relatively inexpensive
- Safe if applied according to the label

Only small amounts of acaricide applied at the right time of year are necessary. Application should focus on control of nymphal *I. scapularis* ticks, the stage most likely to transmit Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, and babesiosis, by spraying once in May or early June. An October application of acaricide may be used to control adult blacklegged ticks, however, they less commonly transmit disease. The use and timing of acaricides to control other ticks of public health concern is less well studied, but may still be helpful.

If you have health concerns about applying acaricides:

- Check with local health or agricultural officials about the best time to apply acaricide in your area.
- Identify rules and regulations related to pesticide application on residential properties (Environmental Protection Agency and your state determine the availability of pesticides).
- Consider using a professional pesticide company to apply pesticides at your home.

Create a Tick-safe Zone to Reduce Ticks in the Yard

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station has developed a comprehensive [Tick Management Handbook](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/lyme/resources/handbook.pdf)  [PDF - 8.53 MB] (<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/lyme/resources/handbook.pdf>) for preventing tick bites. Here are some simple landscaping techniques that can help reduce tick populations:

- Remove leaf litter.
- Clear tall grasses and brush around homes and at the edge of lawns.
- Place a 3-ft wide barrier of wood chips or gravel between lawns and wooded areas to restrict tick migration into recreational areas.
- Mow the lawn frequently.
- Stack wood neatly and in a dry area (discourages rodents).
- Keep playground equipment, decks, and patios away from yard edges and trees.
- Discourage unwelcome animals (such as deer, raccoons, and stray dogs) from entering your yard by constructing fences.
- Remove old furniture, mattresses, or trash from the yard that may give ticks a place to hide.

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