

## What are the symptoms of RMSF?

### SYMPTOMS MAY INCLUDE:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea/vomiting
- Stomach pain
- Rash  
(may not occur in all patients).



← Late-stage rash in patient with Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF)

RMSF usually starts within 2-14 days of being bitten by an infected tick.

Never wait for a rash to develop before seeing your doctor.

## Can RMSF be treated?

RMSF can be treated with antibiotics, but treatment is most effective if started soon after symptoms start. See your doctor right away if you think you may have RMSF.

## How can I protect myself and my family from RMSF?

No vaccine or medicine can prevent RMSF. Protect yourself, your family, and your pets from RMSF by preventing tick bites.

# REMEMBER

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN SPOTTED FEVER CAN BE VERY SERIOUS AND EVEN DEADLY IF NOT TREATED EARLY.**

To Prevent RMSF:

- ✓ Check for ticks daily
- ✓ Treat your dogs to prevent ticks
- ✓ Use insect repellent containing 20-30% DEET when outside
- ✓ Treat your home and yard for ticks

If you get a fever or rash within 2 weeks of being around ticks, see your doctor right away.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact your local health department:



or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Rickettsial Zoonoses Branch: (404) 639-1075  
For urgent calls available 24/7: (770) 488-7100  
Visit our website at: [www.cdc.gov/rmsf](http://www.cdc.gov/rmsf)

# DON'T GET SICK FROM A TICK!

Prevent Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF) in the southwestern United States & Mexico



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases

## What is Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF)?

Rocky Mountain spotted fever (RMSF) is an illness spread through the bite of an infected tick. RMSF can be a very serious and even deadly if not treated early.



RMSF cases have recently become more common in the southwestern United States and US-Mexico border regions. In these areas, RMSF is carried by the brown dog tick.

 Brown dog tick

Brown dog ticks like to feed on dogs. Wherever dogs are, or have been, ticks may be found.



*Dog with brown dog ticks on ear*



## Who is at risk for RMSF?



*Brown dog ticks at each life stage*

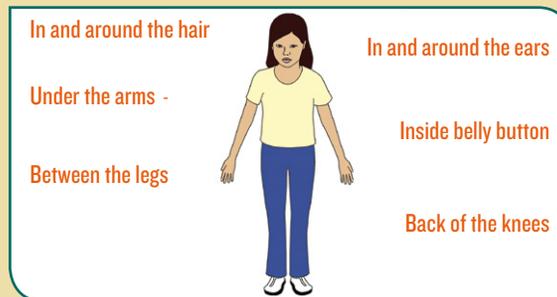


Anyone who lives or spends time in areas with ticks or dogs is at risk for RMSF. These ticks often feed on dogs, so spending time with dogs that have ticks may put you at risk. Ticks can be very small, and tick bites are often painless.

**You may not even know you have been bitten.**

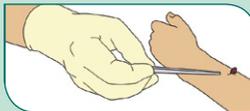
## Keep ticks off you and your family:

- Check for ticks daily. Here's How:



If you find a tick, remove it as soon as possible. **KIDS:** ask an adult for help!

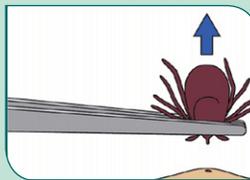
## Here's the best way to remove a tick:



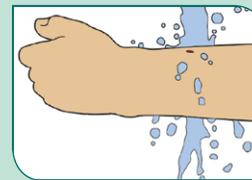
- 1 Use tweezers and protect bare hands with gloves or tissue, if possible.



- 2 Grab tick close to the skin.



- 3 Gently pull straight up until all parts of the tick are removed.



- 4 Wash bite with soap and water.

- Use insect repellent containing 20-30% DEET when outside. Always follow product instructions.
- Shower or bathe as soon as possible after spending time with dogs or in areas where ticks may live.

## Keep ticks off your dogs:

- Dogs can get bitten by ticks and can bring ticks into your home or yard. Dogs can also get sick from RMSF.
- Check your dogs for ticks regularly. Ticks like to hide in the ears, armpits, and in-between the toes of dogs. If you find ticks, remove them just like you do for humans.

## To help prevent ticks from biting your dogs:

- Use tick control products such as tick collars, shampoos, or spot-on treatments containing a tick killing medicine. Reapply tick treatments according to the product label.
- Not all products are safe for puppies or cats. Be sure to read the label carefully. Talk to your animal control office or veterinarian if you have questions about tick control on pets.

*Puppy getting a tick collar*



## Keep your home and yard tick-free:

- Keep grass mowed and yards free of debris, such as mattresses or couches, where ticks may hide.
- Spray your yard with pesticides that kill ticks. Some products can be applied by anyone, but others require a professional pest control service.