



HOW TO REMOVE A TICK

By Chris Pitts, RVT, [Broadway Animal Hospital](#)



Ticks are gross. They carry diseases, and they are literal blood-sucking parasites. Their entire life is dedicated to waiting until an unsuspecting host walks by, jumping on said host and sucking them dry. Eww.

If you see one of these arachnids on your dog, you are going to want to remove it ASAP. It takes approximately 24 hours of attachment for them to transmit the diseases they carry to your dog. Keeping in mind that ticks carry disease such as Lyme, Ehrlichia and Anaplasmosis, I really recommend putting on a pair of rubber or latex gloves before you touch Captain Grossness.

Once you have your gloves on, firmly grab the tick right where he is attached to your dog, so that you are practically pinching your dog's skin, and pull the tick off your dog. Then put the tick in a Ziploc bag and seal it in before you put it in the garbage, or he will crawl out and bite someone else. Then wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water. If you have an open wound of any kind on your hands, I would not try to remove a tick without donning protective rubber gloves.

There are a bunch of different little tick removal tools that are very effective, and keep you from touching the tick. They are just called tick removers. My favorite kind looks like a metal version one of those men's shirt collar stays with a slit in the end. You run the remover across your dog's skin, lodge the insertion point of the tick in the slit, give it a little push forward, and out comes the tick.



If the head of the tick gets left in, the dog's body will push it out. It will become inflamed and swollen and possibly a whitehead may appear at the site. Most of the time these spots will heal on their own. However, I find that the more that we humans push, squeeze, dig and fiddle with the spot, the more likely these spots are to become infected and require antibiotics to heal.

Always contact your vet if you have questions or concerns.