

HEALTH BULLETIN

April 2011

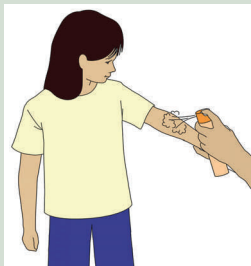
Volume 5 / Number 4

ROCKY MOUNTAIN SPOTTED FEVER

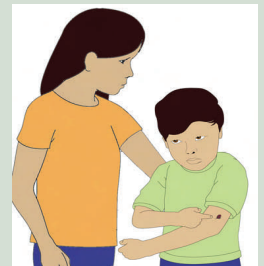
According to state health departments, Arizona had 38 cases of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF), Utah had one case, and no cases were reported in Nevada in 2010. One person died from RMSF in Arizona last year. All of the Arizona cases occurred on tribal land. This disease is transmitted by infected ticks when they bite dogs and humans. The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. (ITCA) can provide educational posters and health bulletins. **Protect your family from Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever by getting rid of ticks.**

If you or your child have a fever or a rash - AND - have been outside or have had contact with dogs, call your health care provider, even if you don't remember being bitten by a tick!

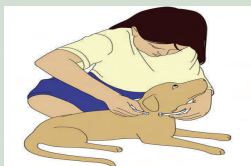
Protect Yourself and Your Family From Ticks By:



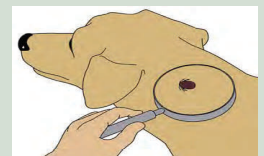
- ✓ Using insect repellent on clothes and skin
- ✓ Doing frequent checks for crawling and biting ticks on yourself and your children while in tick invested areas
- ✓ Doing a full-body exam in private after being in tick invested areas
- ✓ Removing attached ticks and flushing them down the toilet
- ✓ Wearing light colored clothing so you can see ticks easily and tucking your clothes in to keep ticks away from your skin
- ✓ Checking the areas where your dogs sleep inside your home for ticks



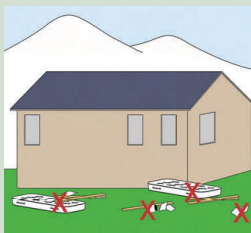
Treat Dogs By:



- ✓ Putting flea/tick collars on dogs, using spot-on treatments (e.g. Frontline, K9 Advantix, etc.), or using sprays or dips.
- ✓ Checking dogs for crawling and biting ticks and removing them



Keep Ticks Away From Your Home By:



- ✓ Using a pest control service or a do-it-yourself pesticide application
- ✓ Cleaning up leaf litter in your yard
- ✓ Removing brush and weeds from your yard
- ✓ Keeping wood piles away from your house
- ✓ Removing furniture and mattresses from your yard and under your house



American Dog Tick



Brown Dog Tick



Rocky Mountain Wood Tick



HEALTH BULLETIN

April 2011

Volume 5/ Number 4

RMSF: FAQ

What is Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever?

Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF) is a severe disease caused by a bacterial organism called *Rickettsia rickettsii*, which is carried by ticks. There are usually a few hundred cases of this disease each year in the United States. This disease can cause long term health problems and can be fatal.

How Does Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever Spread?

Dogs and people can get RMSF if they are bitten by a tick that is carrying the bacterium. If you are removing a tick and accidentally crush its head, the crushed parts can also pass the bacterium to you in scrapes or cut skin. Casual contact like petting a dog or hugging a person with the disease cannot give you the disease.

What are the Symptoms of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever?

This is a very serious and possibly life-threatening disease. People generally start having fever and feeling nauseous about 5-10 days after being bitten by an infected tick. Vomiting, severe headache, muscle pain and loss of appetite are common. A rash may develop after a couple of days of fever, and can appear on wrists, forearms, and ankles, spreading to the trunk, palms and soles of the feet. Patients often need to be hospitalized and about 4% of people with RMSF die from the disease.

Is There Treatment for Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever?

Yes! A provider can give you antibiotics to treat this disease and early treatment is critical. Most long term health problems happen in people whose treatment was delayed.

REMOVING TICKS

Use tweezers and protect bare hands with tissue or gloves, if available. Follow these steps for safe tick removal:



Grab tick close to the skin.



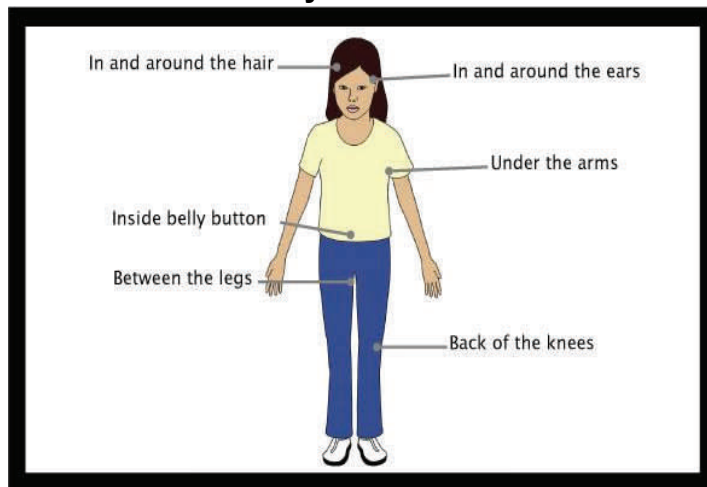
Gently pull straight up until all parts of the tick are removed. Flush the tick down the toilet.



Wash the bite with soap and water.

DO NOT use petroleum jelly, fingernail polish, a lit match, or rubbing alcohol to remove ticks. You might make the tick release more fluids back into the bite wound and that can increase your chance of infection.

Check These Parts of your Child's Body for Ticks:



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Arizona Department of Health Services: http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/oids/vector/rmsf/rocky_mountain.htm

Nevada State Health Division: <http://health.nv.gov/index.htm>

Utah Department of Health: <http://health.utah.gov/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/rmsf/>



Tribal Epidemiology Center
Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc.
2214 N. Central Avenue, Suite 100 • Phoenix, Arizona 85004
Telephone: (602) 258-4822 • Fax: (602) 258-4825
www.itcaonline.com/epi

