

Outdoor pests can cause mild to severe injury or illness by biting or stinging.

Read on for tips on preventing Lyme disease.

A monthly safety newsletter from
Crendon Insurance Brokers

Protecting Yourself From Outdoor Pests

While bites and stings may seem like minor on-the-job injuries, they often have the potential to be severe or life threatening. Outdoor pests that could cause mild to severe injury or illness by biting or stinging include:

- Rodents (carry disease)
- Snakes (inject poisonous venom)
- Ticks (carry Lyme disease and typhus)
- Fleas, lice and mites (carry infection)
- Bees, wasps and hornets (inject toxic venom)
- Mosquitoes (carry viruses)
- Spiders (have poisonous bites)
- Scorpions (cause allergic reactions and lethal venom stings)
- Bats (carry rabies)

To stay safe from bites and stings, concentrate on prevention. Consider the following:

- Never touch a rodent, whether dead or alive.
- Do not approach nests or dens.
- Never pick up, disturb or corner a snake.

- Never pick up or disturb a spider.
- Avoid contact with animals that attract pests like fleas, ticks, lice, mites, bees, wasps and hornets whenever possible.
- Avoid standing pools of water.
- Avoid areas like swamps, dense woods, fields and brush.

Protection

Since it is not always possible to avoid potentially dangerous animals and other pests, taking protective measures is also important:

- Use insect or other repellents.
- Keep as much of your skin covered as possible by wearing hats, socks, long sleeves, etc. Pay attention to cuffed areas such as ankles and wrists.
- Use care when working near nests or other pest homes and hiding places, such as rock piles, logs, timber piles, old tree stumps, outdoor washrooms and old buildings.
- Walk in open areas, wear heavy boots and carry a stick to disturb brush in front of you.
- Keep your work area clean. Control food and rubbish odours when possible.

Working outdoors carries a variety of risks—including bites and stings from outdoor pests. Keep yourself safe with these tips.



**Crendon
Insurance
Brokers**

Lyme Disease Dangers

Lyme disease is the most common tick-borne infectious disease in Europe, according to the NHS. The highest risk of exposure is in wooded areas during spring and summer months. That means construction workers, landscapers, forestry employees, land surveyors, farmers, railway employees, oil field workers and more are all at a high risk of contracting Lyme disease.

Signs and Symptoms

Symptoms of Lyme disease typically develop within two weeks of the tick bite. Although a majority of those infected develop a rash in the shape of a bull's-eye surrounding the bite, 20 to 40 per cent of people do not exhibit this symptom at all. Instead, they may develop flu-like symptoms, including fever, chills, swollen lymph nodes, neck stiffness, fatigue, headaches and migrating joint aches or muscle aches.

Preventing Lyme Disease

Here are some things you can do to reduce your risk of contracting the infection:

- Avoid tick habitats, which include brushy, overgrown, grassy and woody areas.

- Remove leaves, tall grass and brush from work areas.
- Wear light-coloured clothing to see ticks more easily.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and tuck your trousers into your boots to make it more difficult for ticks to reach your skin.
- Wear closed-toed shoes or boots when working in grassy or wooded areas.
- Use tick and bug repellent on your skin. Although permethrin is not safe to use on your skin, it is effective at deterring ticks when used on your clothing.
- After working outside, check body areas where ticks are commonly found. This includes behind the knees, between fingers and toes, armpits, behind ears, on the neck and in any hairy areas.
- Shower well, and wash and dry your clothing at high temperatures after you have been working outside.



Safety in
NUMBERS 12³

Public Health
England estimates
that there are
2,000 to 3,000
new cases of
Lyme disease in
England and
Wales each year...

...about **15-20**
per cent of cases
occur while people
are **abroad**.



Real-life Case Study

A landscaper from the Scottish Highlands had always been careful about spraying tick repellent on his work clothes and wearing long-sleeved shirts and light clothing to easily spot any ticks.

One night after work, he noticed that a tick had latched onto his upper arm. He removed it and kept an eye on the area of the bite for a few weeks. Noticing no rash, he soon forgot about it.

Just a few weeks later, he started becoming nauseated multiple times a day and experiencing other flu-like symptoms that persisted for weeks. The landscaper decided it was best to see a doctor. He was tested for a variety of illnesses, including gastrointestinal distress, multiple sclerosis and even brain tumours. After just two months, he had lost nearly 10 kilograms.

Finally, one doctor tested him for Lyme disease, even though he had none of the common symptoms. His blood samples showed he had contracted Lyme disease. Although the disease was not caught until later, the landscaper managed to make a full recovery with no lingering symptoms.

Contains public sector information published by the UK Government and licensed under the Open Government Licence v1.0.

© 2014 Zywave, Inc. All rights reserved. This publication is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to be exhaustive nor should any discussion or opinions be construed as compliance or legal advice. In relation to any particular problem which they may have, readers are advised to seek specific advice. Further, the law may have changed since first publication and the reader is cautioned accordingly.