



Fact Sheet: Participating Veterinary Clinics

Companion Animal Tick Surveillance Program

If you or your client have been bitten by a tick and are worried about your health

Contact **Health Link (811)** to be referred to a resource appropriate to your situation.

Check for early signs and symptoms of Lyme disease, such as an expanding red rash (usually at the bite site), fever, headache, neck stiffness, swollen lymph nodes and muscle or joint pain. All of these symptoms can occur up to 30 days after you have been bitten. For more information see:

<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/search/Pages/results.aspx?k=Lyme%20disease>

Consult your health care provider right away if you develop symptoms following a tick bite.

What's new this year for veterinary clinics participating in the program

This year, all tick submissions to the Alberta Submit-a-Tick Program must first be screened through eTick by submitting a photograph of the tick using the eTick app or through the [eTick website](#). The app can be downloaded for free from Google Play or the Apple app store. eTick staff will identify the species of the tick using the photograph, and provide the results within one business day.

eTick is an initiative funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada and run through Bishop's University in Quebec. eTick is currently supporting passive tick surveillance in most provinces across Canada.

How to submit a tick photograph to eTick

You can take a picture of the tick following the [photographic guidelines](#) and [submit](#) the picture through the app or through the website. eTick will get back to you within one business day to let you know the species of tick, as well as information about the tick species identified.

- Tick identification and all other services offered by eTick are free of charge.
- Your clinic name and personal information will not be made visible publicly or accessible by other users. The only items visible to the public are the tick pictures, date of tick collection, locality of tick collection, host type, and tick species.
- The website is optimized for three Web browsers: Chrome, Safari, and Firefox. If you happen to be using another browser (e.g. Internet Explorer, Edge), try switching browsers when using eTick.ca. If you are already using one of the recommended browsers and you still experience problems, please contact [eTick](#).
- You should receive an email notification immediately after your submission and an identification answer within one business day. Check your spam/junk-mail folder first and [contact eTick](#) if you still can't find a response to your submission.

What to do with the tick after submitting the photograph on eTick

After submitting the tick photo it is recommended to keep the tick specimen for at least 5 days in case additional photos are needed to complete the identification and/or the tick is requested to be sent for further testing.

Save the tick in a clean, empty and secure container. Do not add any ventilation holes to the container. Add a small piece of tissue or cotton ball, lightly moistened with water, into the container to prevent the tick from drying out. Ticks can be stored in the freezer.

Please note: Until the Alberta Public Health Laboratory is ready to accept ticks for testing, eTick may request ticks that cannot be identified by photo to be sent to them directly in order to verify the species. Sending requested ticks to eTick in Quebec will be at the expense of the submitter, and is optional.

When the Alberta Public Health Laboratory will start accepting ticks as part of the Companion Animal Tick Surveillance Program

The Alberta Public Health Laboratory will not begin accepting ticks until sometime later this year (likely in June 2021). Instructions for veterinary clinics on how to send in a tick to the Alberta Public Health Laboratory are still being finalized. A new requisition is being developed along with a method to ship the ticks at no charge to the clinic. Updates will be provided on the Government of Alberta webpage: [Lyme disease and tick surveillance | Alberta.ca](#)

Clients can submit tick photographs to eTick that they find on their pets

Photographs of ticks found on pets, people or in the environment can be submitted to eTick by the public. Results will be provided to whomever submitted the photo. Only one photo submission should be done for each tick specimen.

Do not submit a tick to a local public health office or First Nations and Inuit Health office

Due to COVID-19, all available resources and staff at Alberta Health, Alberta Health Services Environmental Public Health and Indigenous Services Canada First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, are helping to manage the pandemic and cannot accept ticks for submission.

Check for updates on the program:

[Lyme disease and tick surveillance | Alberta.ca](#)

Thank you for your participation in the program