



# Fact Sheet:

## Alberta Submit-a-Tick Program



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

Contact Health Link (811). They can refer you to a resource that is appropriate to your situation.

Consult your health care provider right away if you develop symptoms following a tick bite. **If you have a rash, fever, or flu-like symptoms within 30 days of a known tick exposure**, talk to your health-care provider about when and where you may have been exposed to a tick(s).

Your health-care provider does not need the tick to make a diagnosis. However, if the tick is available, your health care provider may submit it for testing. For more information see: [MyHealthAlberta: Lyme Disease](#)

### How to submit a tick for identification

The Submit-A-Tick program accepts digital photos of ticks found on people, animals and in the environment.

Tick submissions in Alberta are first screened at eTick by submitting a digital photo of the tick. This can be done using their free mobile app (available from your app store) or directly online via the [eTick.ca](#). eTick also provides submission details and image requirements.

### What to do after submitting the photograph on eTick

- After submitting your photo, save the tick in a clean, empty, plastic container with a tight-fitting lid for at least 10 days. This is in case additional digital photos are needed to complete the identification.
  - Do not add any ventilation holes to the container.
  - Ticks can be stored in the refrigerator or freezer.
- Photo submitted will be used to identify the tick species and you will typically get the results within 2 business days.
  - If the tick is identified as a type that can transmit the bacteria (*Borrelia burgdorferi*) that may cause Lyme disease, or cannot be identified by photo, you will be asked to submit the tick for additional testing to the Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL).
  - If the tick is not identified as a type that can transmit the bacteria that causes Lyme disease, it can be discarded. Testing of ticks for other tick-borne diseases testing is not available in Alberta.

Questions about e-Tick submission process or getting results? Contact [admin@etick.ca](mailto:admin@etick.ca).

*NOTE: Alberta Health Services Environmental Public Health and Indigenous Services Canada First Nations and Inuit Health Branch offices do not accept tick submissions.*

## Laboratory testing of ticks for surveillance

If you are asked by eTick to submit your tick to the Alberta Precision Laboratory (APL), complete and print the [APL Tick Testing Request form](#). This form **must** accompany your tick to the lab. By submitting the tick to the lab when requested, you are helping Alberta Health monitor for ticks of public health concern in Alberta.

You can drop off the tick together with the completed [APL Tick Testing Request form](#) by mail, or in person at participating lab locations. Shipping instructions, including drop off locations and mailing address, are included on the form.

**NOTE: Hospital labs do NOT accept tick submissions**

### Important

- A completed [APL Tick Testing Request form](#) **must** accompany ticks that are either mailed-in or dropped off.
- Label each tick container with the **eTick ID number**, otherwise the lab will not be able to provide results.
- If submitting more than one tick, be sure to include only one tick per container. Each tick will need its own APL Tick Testing Request form and unique eTick ID number. Be sure to label each container and form with the corresponding eTick ID.
- The lab will provide results to you by mail within 2 to 3 weeks. Ensure that your complete mailing address is included on the APL Tick Testing Request form if you wish to receive the results.

### What the results mean

**These results are not meant to diagnose or treat tick-borne illnesses in people or pets.**

- **eTick Photo identification** – identifies tick species.
- **APL testing** – confirms tick species and, if applicable, the results of testing for the Lyme bacteria, *Borrelia burgdorferi*.

The results can be shared with your health-care provider if you are concerned about a bite from the tick.

**New in 2024! Questions about submitting ticks to or getting results from the lab?** APL now has a single point of contact for any queries regarding ticks that are sent to the lab as a part of the Submit-a-Tick program.

- The lab response team can be reached during business hours (8 am to 4 pm, Monday to Friday):
  - Phone: 780-407-7121 (press 1)
  - E-mail: [PRL.Tick.Response@albertaprecisionlabs.ca](mailto:PRL.Tick.Response@albertaprecisionlabs.ca)
- For more information on laboratory identification of surveillance ticks, see [Alberta Precision Laboratories | Lab Services \(albertahealthservices.ca\)](#).

Check back on the Government of Alberta webpage for updates on the program including annual summary reports [Lyme disease and tick surveillance | Alberta.ca](#) or scan the QR code below:

