



## Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever Alert

**Window Rock, AZ; March 12, 2012** - Navajo Nation Veterinarian and Livestock Program (NNV&LP) are concerned about reports of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF) in the southwest. NNV&LP is sharing prevention tips with communities to alert and prevent RMSF.

RMSF is carried by ticks often found on dogs and cats. The infected tick carries RMSF that can cause illness in humans. Not all ticks carry this disease. The Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF) is not contagious.

Ticks are parasites that suck blood and come in various sizes. A tick may be brown and turn grayish as they fill with blood.

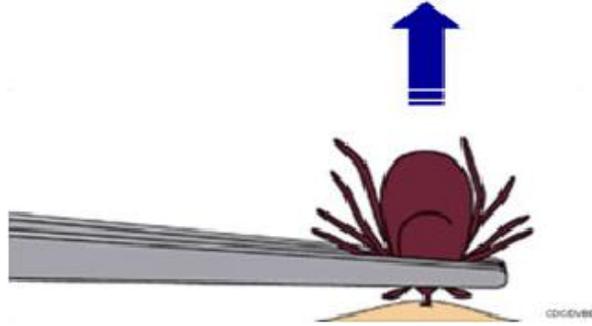


Some ticks are as small as the head of a pin.

Following a tick bite from an infected tick, the first symptoms may occur 2 to 14 days. Tick bites can cause fever, headache, rash, nausea, vomiting, and muscle pain, lack of appetite, red eyes and abdominal pain.

It is strongly advised that parents keep children and toys away from pets and pet houses. Look for ticks on yourself and your children. Look through the hair and hairline, in and around the ears, on the neck, under the arms, elbows, around the waist, back of the knees, ankles, in the belly button, on the thighs and private parts. A tick on a human body may look like a mold or a speck.

A tick should be removed with a tweezer and placed in a Ziploc Bag



Get close to the base of the tick and pull it straight upward, be careful not to “Pop” the tick. The area of the tick bite should be swabbed with alcohol. Keep the tick in the Ziploc bag and mark it with the date of removal. If you develop a rash or a fever, get medical attention. You can take the tick with you in the Ziploc bag to the hospital. Wear protective eye wear when removing ticks. Sunglasses are okay.

Pet owners are encouraged to check their dog or cats carefully. Ticks may be carried into the house by pets. Check your dog’s chest, stomach, legs and feet. Examine between the toes, in the armpits and inside the ears.

Homes without dogs are still in danger of having ticks. Reducing weeds and mowing the grass will reduce the problem. Ticks are found where animals rest, shady places, under decks, porches or under houses. Skirting of elevated homes will keep animals out. Apply pesticide to kill ticks. One female adult tick can lay up to 3,000 eggs.

Other ways to prevent tick infestation is to use tick collars on your dogs or cats. Recommendations include sprays or dips and decreasing the number of pets in the household. Pet owners should improve their pet’s health. Dogs can get sick and die.

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