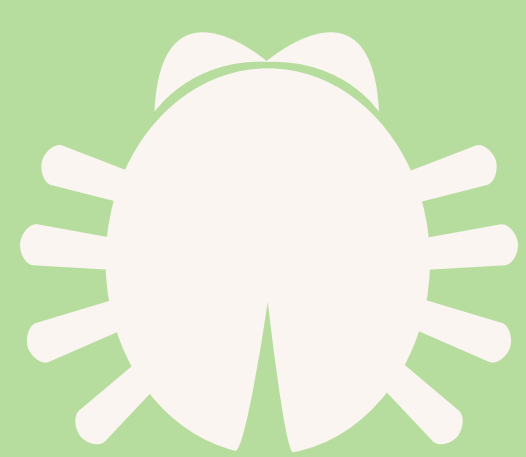


"Tick" Talk

By: Aaron Shaw, MD, Annie Wirtz, PharmD, BCPPS

It's summertime, which means we are spending more time outdoors. With the warmer weather, mosquitos and ticks become more prevalent. Check out the information below to find out when antibiotics are needed in the setting of tick bites.



I found a tick on me! Do I need antibiotics?

If you're **not having any symptoms**, then you **don't need any antibiotics** for a tick bite. The **tick should be removed** as soon as it's found, and the bite cleaned after the tick's removal. Click [here](#) to learn more about tick removal.



When are antibiotics prescribed after a tick bite?

Antibiotics may be used after tick bites in areas with Lyme Disease, including the Northeast or Minnesota/Wisconsin. **Lyme Disease** carrying ticks are **uncommon in Kansas/Missouri**. If symptoms develop after a tick bite, **seek medical care** because **antibiotics may be required**. Click [here](#) for symptoms.



What antibiotic is commonly prescribed for tick bites?

Doxycycline is the antibiotic of choice. In the past, doxycycline was avoided in children due to concerns for tooth discoloration with use of related antibiotics. However, there have been **no cases of tooth discoloration with doxycycline** and it should be prescribed to children for treatment of tick infections.



What side effects should I watch for with doxycycline?

You or your child may **sunburn** more easily. Avoid outdoors or wear **protective clothing/sunscreen**. Take capsules/tablets with a **large glass of water** and **remain upright** to avoid throat irritation. **Do not take** at the same time as **multivitamins, calcium, magnesium, or iron-containing medications**.



How can I avoid tick bites in the future?

Ticks live in **grassy or wooded areas**. You can avoid these areas or take precautions. Treat clothing and gear with products containing **0.5% permethrin**. Use **insect repellents** to keep ticks off. Perform a **tick check** on yourself and pets. **Shower** after coming inside. Click [here](#) to learn more.



Guest author, **Dr. Aaron Shaw**, is a second year fellow in Infectious Diseases at Children's Mercy. Fun facts about Aaron include: he has sung the National Anthem at a Red Sox game and his favorite superhero is Captain America.