

Fast Facts

Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever

- Infection that is caused by bacteria, *Rickettsia rickettsia*
- Usually transmitted to humans through the bite of a tick
- First discovered in the Rocky Mountains
- Is present in southeastern part of US, Canada, Mexico, Central America and South America

<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Prevention</i>
<p>-Appear within a week of being infected</p> <p><i>First:</i></p> <p>-Severe headache</p> <p>-High fever</p> <p><i>Other:</i></p> <p>-Chills</p> <p>-Muscle aches</p> <p>-Nausea/vomiting</p> <p>-Confusion</p> <p>-Neurological changes</p> <p><i>Most Recognize:</i></p> <p>-Non-itchy, red rash that appears on the wrists and ankles about 3-5 days after the other symptoms start and spreads to hands, feet, arms, legs and torso</p> <p><i>Note:</i> some people never develop a rash</p>	<p><i>Antibiotic:</i></p> <p>-Doxycycline</p> <p>-Chloramphenicol (if pregnant)</p> <p><i>Complications:</i></p> <p>-Inflammation of the brain (encephalitis),</p> <p>-Inflammation in heart, lungs or kidneys causing them to fail</p> <p>-Gangrene of toes/fingers requiring them to be amputated</p> <p>-If not treated, results in death almost 80% of the time</p>	<p>-Cover skin so that nothing is exposed by wearing long-sleeves and pants that are tucked into either socks or boots</p> <p>-Wear light-colored clothing</p> <p>-Use insect repellent that specifically states it is good protection against ticks (do NOT use any products containing DEET on children)</p> <p>-Treat pets with flea/tick repellents</p> <p>-Promptly check yourself and others for ticks when you come inside</p> <p>-Wash all clothing in warm/hot water or put in the dryer on high heat for at least 10 minutes</p> <p>-Tick proof yard by removing any brush or leaves where ticks might live and keep woodpiles in sunny areas</p>

Remove ticks gently. Make sure to wear gloves (if possible) and thoroughly wash your hands. If you have access to tweezers, flip the tick onto its back and grasp firmly with the tweezers (small curved ones work best) and apply gentle pulling until tick comes free. Don't twist/turn as this can detach the body of the tick from its head/mouth (if this happens, you need to have the rest removed by a doctor—the part that is still imbedded is the piece that is most likely to transmit any diseases). If you don't have access to tweezers, use your fingers to gently rotate the tick's body clockwise or counterclockwise for a few minutes. This will irritate the tick enough that it will let go of your skin. You can use tape to remove it from your body. Another option if you don't have tweezers is to take liquid soap, put it on a cotton ball and place it over the tick for 15-20 seconds. The tick will release and get caught in the cotton ball.

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