

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 ticks found on people, animals and in the environment.

All ticks must first be screened through eTick by submitting a photograph of the tick. This can be done through the **eTick** app or through [eTick.ca](#). Access to the platform and links to the mobile eTick application in Google Play or App store are available [here](#). Further instructions, including details on suitable images, are available on the [eTick](#) website or app.

What to do after submitting the photograph on eTick

- After submitting your photograph, save the tick in a clean, empty, and secure container for at least 10 days. This is in case you need to submit additional photographs to complete the identification. Do not add any ventilation holes to the container.
 - Ticks can be stored in the refrigerator or freezer.
- The photographs submitted will be used to identify the tick species and you will get the results, typically within two business days.
 - If the tick identified is a type that can transmit the bacteria (*Borrelia burgdorferi*) that causes Lyme disease, or if it cannot be identified from the photograph, you will be asked to submit the tick to the Alberta Public Health Laboratory for additional testing.
 - If the tick is not identified as a type that can transmit the bacteria that causes Lyme disease, it can be discarded.

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 to submit your tick to the Alberta Precision Laboratory, complete and print the [Alberta Precision Laboratories \(APL\) Tick Testing Request form](#) that must accompany your tick to the lab (see below for details). By submitting the tick to the lab when requested, you are helping to 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 request form, and are also provided below:

1. Place the tick in a small hard plastic container with a tight fitting lid such as clean empty pill bottle.
 - Do not use glass containers or straws.
2. Label the container with the [eTick identification \(ID\) number](#) provided in your email notification (e.g., ETXXXX).
3. Place the container in a clean plastic bag and close securely (e.g., Ziploc bag).
4. Complete the [APL Tick Testing Request form](#).
5. Add the sealed plastic bag (with tick) and completed [APL Tick Testing Request form](#) to an envelope or box suitable for mailing.
6. Mail to:
**Specimen Receiving
Public Health Lab (ProvLab) North
University of Alberta Hospital
WMC 2B4.04, 8440-112 Street
Edmonton, AB T6G 2J2**
7. For in-person drop, follow the same instructions outlined above (steps 1–4), then drop off the sealed plastic bag and the completed APL Tick Testing Request form at any of the following lab locations listed here: informalberta.ca/public/service/serviceProfileStyled.do?serviceQueryId=4245

****NOTE: Acute care/hospital labs do NOT accept tick submissions****

Important

- A completed Tick Testing Request form **must** accompany ticks that are either mailed-in or dropped off, and each tick container **must** be labelled with the **eTick ID number**, otherwise the lab will not be able to provide results.
- If you have more than one tick to submit to the lab, be sure to include only one tick in each secure container. Each tick will need its own submission form completed with its own unique eTick ID number. Be sure to label each container with the corresponding eTick ID.
- The lab will provide results to you by mail within two to three weeks. Ensure that your complete mailing address is included on the submission 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.
- **Laboratory 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.

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