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House & Home

10 Expert Tips to Help Reduce the Risks of Ticks

As the weather begins to warm, the threat of a tick-borne illness escalates. "Each season is becoming progressively worse and it's critical that people within our communities take the right steps to keep themselves and their families safe when venturing out, as well as their properties," says Brian Kelly, owner of East End Tick & Mosquito Control and a tick expert with more than two decades of experience in the industry.

Kelly is driven by the philosophy that "prevention is better than a cure" and takes a proactive approach with tick safety. Memorial Day weekend brings the unofficial kick-off to summer, meaning plenty of outdoor fun in the sun, and plenty of opportunity for a run-in with ticks—which is why Kelly is offering up 10 tips for East End residents to help decrease the risk of contracting a tick-related illness:

- Remember, ticks can be found anywhere. It's important to use repellent when going outdoors and to check for ticks often.

- Keep pets confined to your landscaped lawn and never allow them to enter the woods or woods edge.

- If you stopped your pet's tick prevention over the winter, get it started again NOW.

- Implement a professional rodent control program around your home to reduce the number of ticks on your property.

- Remind kids of the dangers of going into the woods and uncharted territory. Teach them how to check themselves, too.



FRIENDS DON'T LET FRIENDS ACQUIRE TICK-RELATED DISEASES

- Keep a tick removal kit ready so you are well-prepared if you do come across an embedded tick.

- Keep your grass cut short and don't over-water your plants and shrubs. Ticks are attracted to long grass and cool damp areas.

- Ivy and other sorts of ground cover are tick hot spots and should be avoided.

- As part of your spring yard clean-up, eliminate tick habitats by raking and removing leaves that may have blown into yard edges and under shady vegetation.

- Spray monthly from April through October to control populations on your property.

For those who may not know, the transmission of Lyme disease is most commonly a result of bites by immature ticks called nymphs. The nymphs are less than 2 mm in size—comparable to a poppy seed—and are incredibly difficult to see, and the bites are painless. In addition to their small size, they typically attach at hard-to-see areas of the body such as the groin, armpits and scalp.

As a result, bite victims contract Lyme disease—an acute inflammatory bacterial infection nicknamed "The Great Imitator" because symptoms are similar to many other diseases affecting all organs of the body, including the brain and nervous system, joints and muscles, and heart.

"A new year brings new concerns," Kelly says. For preventative measures and fighting the threat of tick-borne illness, "the time is now."

East End Tick & Mosquito Control is the first and only New York State licensed and dedicated tick and mosquito control specialist, with over 20 years of extensive experience, servicing Long Island's East End from Moriches to Montauk, Wading River to Orient Point and on Shelter Island. Family-owned and operated, the company specializes in traditional and organic control methods, offering alternatives to harsh pesticides and is committed to the most environmentally responsible and effective programs.