

When using tick sprays, the golden rule is to use active ingredients proven effective against arachnids—such as **DEET** or **Icaridin** (Picaridin)—and always read the product label for application limits. Apply just enough to lightly cover exposed skin or clothing. [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]

The Dos

- **Do use the right concentration:** Look for at least 20% DEET (max 30% for safety) or 20% Icaridin for long-lasting tick protection. [6]
- **Do spray your clothes:** Ticks usually latch on near the ground and crawl up. Spraying the cuffs of your pants, socks, and shoes is highly effective. [7, 8, 9, 10, 11]
- **Do apply to face correctly:** Never spray directly onto your face. Spray the product into your hands first, then carefully pat it onto your face and around your ears. [2]
- **Do use separate products:** Do not use combination bug sprays and sunscreens, as sunscreen usually needs to be reapplied more frequently than tick repellent. [11]
- ****Do wash off:** ** Once you are safely back indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water. [2]

The Don'ts

- **Don't apply to damaged skin:** Never spray repellent on cuts, wounds, sunburned, or irritated skin. [12]
- **Don't let children handle sprays:** Adults should spray the repellent onto their own hands first and then apply it to the child, strictly avoiding the child's hands to prevent them from rubbing it in their eyes or mouth. [2, 4]
- **Don't use under clothing:** Apply repellents only to exposed skin or outer clothing. [2]
- **Don't use Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (OLE) on young kids:** Do not use products containing OLE or PMD on children under the age of 3. [1]
- **Don't use Permethrin on your skin:** Permethrin is an incredibly effective tool for killing ticks, but it is strictly designed for treating gear and clothing, not your body. [5, 13]

To confirm you are choosing a Health Canada or EPA-registered product, check the label for a registration number (PCP or EPA). [4, 14]

These links may help narrow down the safest and most effective product for your outdoor activities.

[1] <https://www.cdc.gov>

[2] <https://www.cdc.gov>

[3] <https://www.outdoors.org>

[4] <https://healthycanadians.gc.ca>

[5] <https://www.cbsnews.com>

[6] <https://www.health.harvard.edu>

[7] <https://www.waskasoopark.ca>

[8] <https://www.youtube.com>

[9] <https://www.youtube.com>

[10] <https://www.epa.gov>

- [11] <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>
- [12] <https://www.globallymealliance.org>
- [13] <https://outdoor.wildlifeillinois.org>
- [14] <https://www.health.ny.gov>