

Tick prevention for humans vary between socio-economic levels

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As part of a TickNET collaboration, [researchers examined the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to tick-borne disease prevention](#) among persons living in endemic areas of Connecticut and Maryland.¹ They found that out of the nearly 2,000 people surveyed, performing tick checks for humans and applying tick control to pets were the two most common tick bite prevention behaviors.

Overall, participants reported using the following tick bite prevention methods most of the time or always: pet tick control (83%); tick checks (58%); showering/bathing (42%); insect repellent (31%); chemical (23%) or natural (15%) pesticides on property.

Interestingly, the authors found that tick prevention behaviors varied between different socio-economic levels.

“Those with a higher education level and incomes may choose other more expensive options such as property measures, including use of lawn treatments (as was observed in this study) and/or landscaping options,” writes Niesobecki.

For example, incomes over \$100,000 were “significantly associated with applying a chemical or natural pesticide to one’s property.” However, people with higher incomes were less likely to practice personal prevention behaviors, Niesobecki explains.

Meanwhile, individuals with a lower educational level were more prone to engage in personal protection, such as checking for ticks, showering/bathing after being outdoors, using insect repellents and applying pet tick control products.

The authors’ speculated as to why the difference in behaviors.

“Individuals with lower education may be more likely to have jobs that require outside work, for example landscaping or yard maintenance, leading to the need to perform tick checks more often. It may also reflect different opinions about the acceptability of insect repellent use.”

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References:

1. Niesobecki S, Hansen A, Rutz H, et al. Knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding tick-borne disease prevention in endemic areas. *Ticks Tick Borne Dis.* 2019;10(6):101264.

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