

# LIFE CYCLE OF THE BLACKLEGGED TICK

Ticks have 4 life stages

EGG

LARVA

NYMPH

ADULT



 Blacklegged ticks lay batches of **eggs** in the spring.

 Ticks hatch from eggs into a **larvae** in late July and August.

 **zzzZZ** After larvae have a blood meal, they molt into **nymphs** in late summer and fall. Nymphs are inactive in the winter cold months.

 Nymphs will come out again in the late spring and summer.

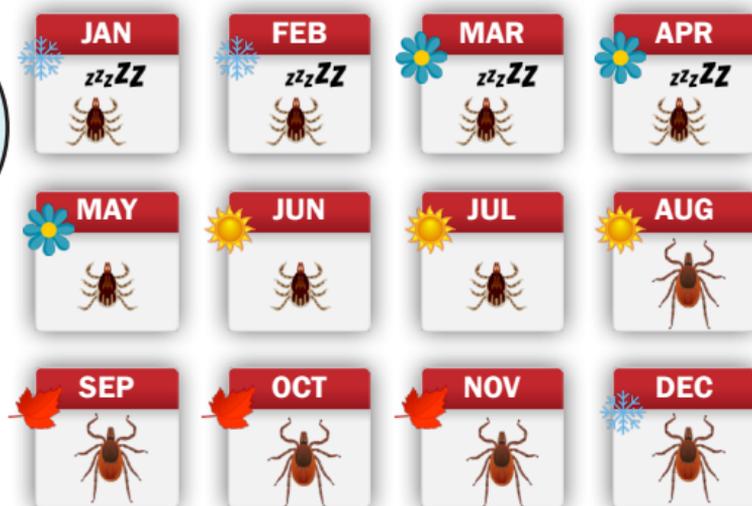
 After nymphs have a blood meal, they molt into **adults**. Adult ticks are active in the fall.

**Careful!** Adult ticks are active all year, even on warm winter days!

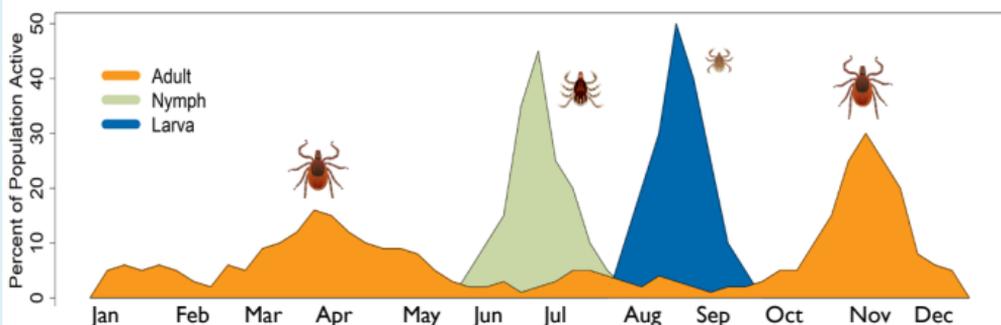
1<sup>st</sup> year  
of a  
tick's life



2<sup>nd</sup> year  
of a  
tick's life



# WHEN ARE YOU MOST AT RISK?



You are most at risk of getting sick from a tick bite when **nymph** and **adult** ticks are out in high numbers during the warm months of the year.

## Larvae

- Human risk of infection from tick larvae is low.
- Ticks take their first blood meal when they are larvae. Blacklegged tick larvae mostly feed on small mammals, like mice and chipmunks.
- This blood meal is a tick's first chance to become infected with bacteria and viruses from the animal they bite.

## Nymphs

- Human risk of infection is highest with nymphs because they are very small and hard to see if they bite.
- Ticks take their second blood meal when they are nymphs. If a tick was infected with a bacteria or virus as a larva, it can give that infection to the animal or person it feeds on as a nymph.
- This blood meal is also a tick's second chance to pick up an infection from the animal they bite.

## Adults

- Human risk of infection from tick adults is high.
- Ticks take their third blood meal when they are adults. Adult ticks could have been infected with a bacteria or virus as a larva OR as a nymph.
- Adult ticks are easier to see than nymphs, but are more likely to carry a disease agent that can make you sick.

Visit [neregionalvectorcenter.com](http://neregionalvectorcenter.com) or [dontgettickedny.org](http://dontgettickedny.org) to learn more!

