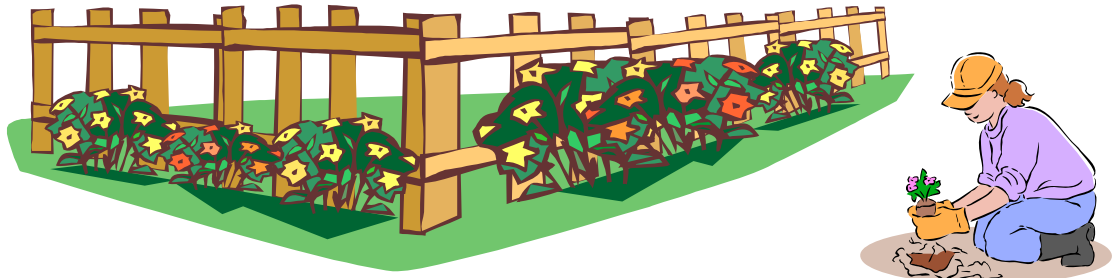
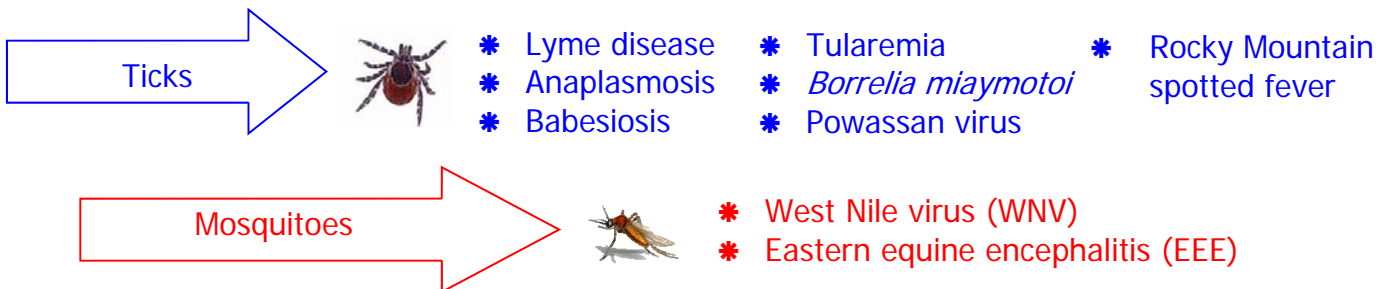


Gardening Tips — Don't let the bugs bite!



Gardening is enjoyable and there are many benefits to this outdoor activity. But, both ticks and mosquitoes are often found around vegetation and both may spread disease if they bite you.


In Massachusetts, the diseases that may be spread by ticks and mosquitoes are:





How to Avoid Bites

Be Aware of Peak Activity Times.



 The hours from dusk to dawn are peak biting times for many mosquitoes. Gardening during the middle of the day may decrease your chance of getting bitten.

 Ticks seeking a host to feed on are most active April through October.


Clothing Can Help Reduce Bites.

  Wearing long-sleeves, long pants and socks when outdoors will help keep mosquitoes and ticks away from your skin. Making the long-sleeves, pants and socks light-colored will help you spot a tick on them more easily.

Use Insect Repellent.

  Use a repellent with DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide), or permethrin, according to the instructions on the product label. DEET is designed to be applied directly to your skin while permethrin is applied to your clothing. Products containing other active ingredients such as oil of lemon eucalyptus, picaradin or IR 3535 are also effective against mosquitoes and ticks.

Do a Tick Check Daily.

 Finding and removing ticks promptly will help prevent them from spreading disease to you. Check yourself all over for ticks in a well-lit room. They like to hide in warm, dark areas like between the toes, in back of the knees, groin, armpits, and neck, along the hairline, and behind the ears. Some of them are as small as poppy seeds, so use a magnifying glass if you have to. Remove any attached ticks using a pair of fine-tipped tweezers. Grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible and pull gently but firmly, straight outwards.