

Farm Visits and Tick Advice

What to do when visiting a farm

Farm visits are an enjoyable and educational experience. Following a few simple rules will help keep you and your family safe from the small risk of infection that can come from animals or the farm environment. Pregnant women need to take particular care as infections acquired from animals can be harmful to them and their unborn baby.

Things you should do when visiting a farm:

- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after you have touched animals, fences or other surfaces in animal areas*
- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before eating or drinking*
- supervise children closely to ensure that they wash their hands thoroughly*
- only eat and drink in picnic areas or cafes*
- remove and clean your boots or shoes if they have become dirty or muddy and clean pushchair wheels. Make sure to wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water afterwards*
- follow instructions and signage provided on farm sites*

Things you should not do when visiting a farm:

- do not touch your face or put your fingers in your mouth while petting animals or walking around the farm*
- do not allow children to put their faces close to animals*
- do not eat or drink while touching animals or walking round the farm. This includes not eating sweets, crisps or chewing gum*
- do not eat anything that has fallen on the floor*
- do not use gels or wipes instead of washing hands with soap and water. Gels and wipes do not remove all germs you could catch from animals*

If you feel unwell afterwards

- Contact your GP or NHS 111 if you have sickness or diarrhoea within two weeks of visiting a farm*
- Seek emergency medical help immediately if you or a child has bloody diarrhoea*
- If you have experienced sickness or diarrhoea after visiting a farm you should stay away from work, school or nursery until you have been symptom-free for at least 48 hours.*

More information can be found [here](#)

TICKS – Be Tick Aware

Another aspect to consider for outdoor activities are ticks, which are most active between spring and autumn and which can sometimes transmit diseases such as Lyme disease.

There are many actions that can be taken to prevent tick bites, and to remove ticks safely if needed.

Tick advice

The best way to avoid being bitten by ticks when out walking is to keep to footpaths and avoid long grass.

Other advice to people walking in areas known to have a high tick population is to:

- *Wear appropriate clothing (a long-sleeve shirt and trousers tucked into socks)*
- *Use an insect repellent*
- *Wear light-coloured fabrics that may help spot a tick on clothing*
- *Inspect your skin for ticks, particularly at the end of the day, including your head, neck and skin folds (armpits, groin and waist)*
- *Ask parents and carers to check their children's head and neck areas, including their scalp*

How to remove a tick

If you do get bitten by a tick, removing it quickly and correctly can help to reduce any potential risk. The safe way to remove a tick is to use a pair of fine-tipped tweezers, or an easy-to-use device which can be purchased from pharmacies or vets. Then:

- *Grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible. Pull upwards slowly and firmly, as mouth parts left in the skin can cause a local infection*
- *Once removed, apply antiseptic to the bite area and keep an eye on it for several weeks for any changes*
- *Call NHS 111 if the person begins to feel unwell or develops a circular red skin rash, often described as a bull's-eye rash, and remember to tell them that the person was bitten by a tick.*

More information on ticks can be found [here](#) and the [NHS website](#) for more information on signs, symptoms and treatments for Lyme disease.