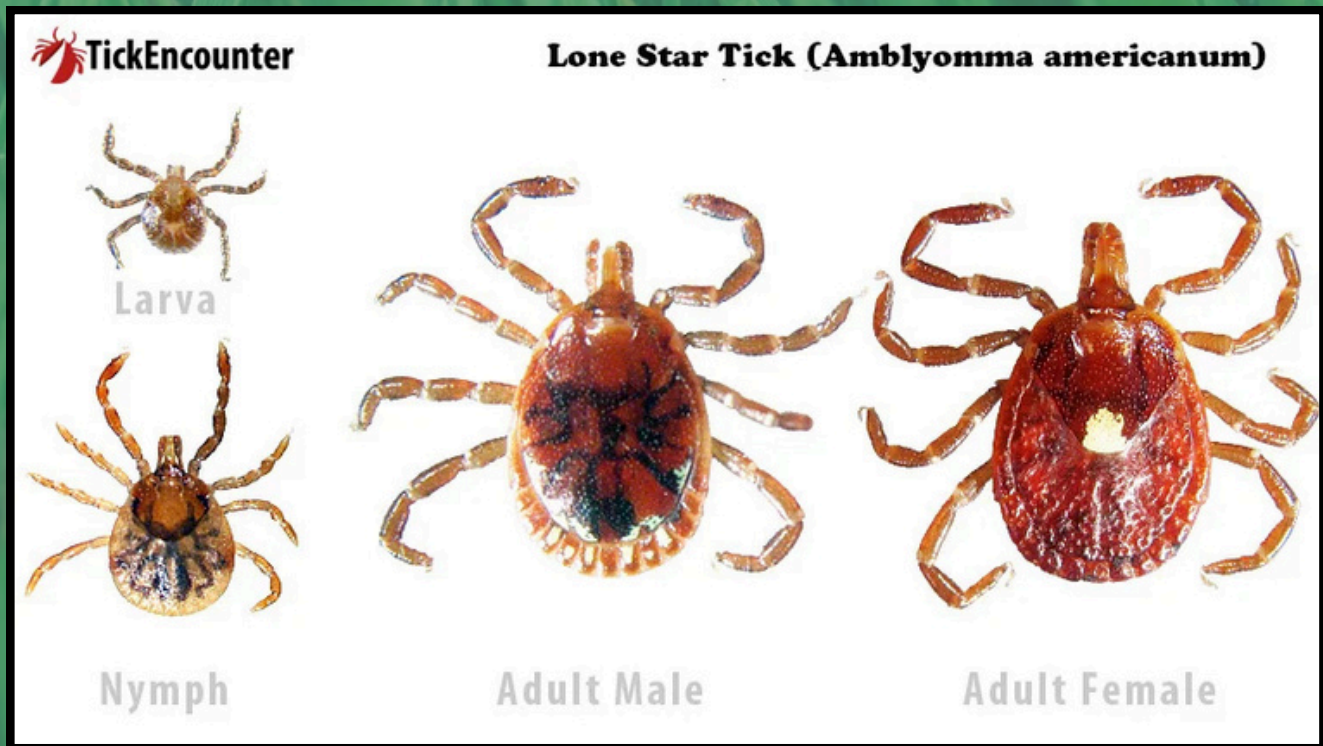


# LONE STAR TICK

Protect yourself from Alpha-gal Syndrome



ALPHA-GAL SYNDROME (AGS) IS AN EMERGING TICK-BORNE ILLNESS THAT IS SPREADING GLOBALLY. SINCE IT WAS OFFICIALLY IDENTIFIED BY THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY IN 2009, IT HAS BECOME A GROWING CONCERN FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EXPERTS. IN THE UNITED STATES, AGS IS MOST PREVALENT IN THE SOUTHEASTERN STATES, BUT IT IS RAPIDLY SPREADING NORTHWARD ALONG THE EAST COAST AND INTO NEW ENGLAND.

# LONE STAR TICK

*Amblyomma americanum*

## Overview

Lone Star ticks are found mostly in woodlands with dense undergrowth and around animal resting areas. The larvae do not carry disease-causing germs (although they still inject allergic saliva when they bite), but the nymphal and adult stages can transmit the germs causing Human (Monocytic Ehrlichiosis), Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, and 'Stari' borreliosis. Lone Star ticks are aggressive human biters, and their bite is associated with the development of a red meat allergy (alpha-gal syndrome) in some people. Alpha-gal syndrome (AGS) is a delayed-onset allergic reaction to a sugar molecule called alpha-galactose (alpha-gal).

**Symptoms of AGS** usually appear 2-8 hours after consuming mammalian meat (such as beef, pork, lamb, or venison). They may include:

- Hives
- Swelling (e.g., face, lips, tongue)
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal pain
- Shortness of breath
- Anaphylaxis (in severe cases)
- People with AGS may also have an allergic reaction to certain medications and cosmetics that contain alpha-gal.

## Ways to prevent alpha-gal syndrome

The following preventive measures can help avoid a possible bite by the lone star tick:

- Cover up
- Use bug spray
- Tick-proof your yard
- Check yourself and your kids
- Shower ASAP
- Remove ticks quickly

