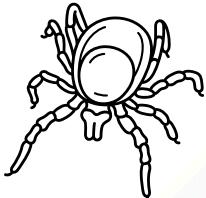


BABESIOSIS

A rare, but serious, tick-borne disease that attacks red blood cells.



How it Spreads

Babesiosis usually spreads from the **bite of an infected black-legged or deer tick**.

- These ticks are common in San Diego. They can be found in wooded, brushy, or grassy areas.
- Less common ways of getting infected include getting a blood transfusion from someone who was infected or if an infected pregnant person passes it to their baby.

Symptoms

Many people with babesiosis do not have symptoms. If symptoms do occur, they start 1-4 weeks after infection (tick bite).

- **Flu-like symptoms:** fever, chills, sweats, headache, body aches, loss of appetite, nausea, fatigue.
- **Hemolytic anemia:** can cause fatigue, weakness, jaundice (yellow skin), fever, and dark urine. In severe cases, it can be life-threatening.
- **Serious health problems:** low blood pressure, severe hemolytic anemia, low platelet count, blood clotting and bleeding in the body, organ failure, and death.



Prevention

- Use EPA-registered insect repellents.
- **Avoid tick bites** by staying on clear trails to avoid dead leaves and brush where ticks live and by wearing socks, long pants, and long-sleeved shirts.
- **Check for ticks** after being outdoors on yourself and pets. Remove ticks with fine-tipped tweezers without twisting. Clean the area with antiseptic.
- Use tick prevention treatments in pets.

Treatment

- Babesiosis is diagnosed through blood testing.
- Treatment is usually not needed if there are no signs or symptoms.
 - When needed, treatment includes antibiotics with more intensive treatment required for severe cases.



Who Is At Risk?

- People who spend time outdoors in areas where ticks are common (hikers, campers, hunters).
- Older adults and those with weakened immune systems.
- Pets that spend time outdoors.

