Tick Management

Background

Ixodes holocylus the Australian paralysis tick is found 20-30km inland along the east coast of Australia.



Photograph courtesy of Queensland Museum.

Allergic Conditions caused by Tick Bite

Allergic reactions can occur to their bites. These include:

- Large local allergic reactions
- Tick induced anaphylaxis
- Mammalian meat induced anaphylaxis associated with prior tick bites.

How to Manage a Tick Bite

Most tick bites will not cause any serious problems and you will be left with a small red area which requires no active treatment.

How you manage bites is dependent on whether you have any known allergy to tick bites.

If you get anaphylaxis with a tick bite and identify one on you then you should proceed to the nearest Emergency Department to facilitate removal. If you develop symptoms and signs of anaphylaxis then use your epipen if you have one and/or call 000.

Tick Management

DO *NOT* scratch anything you can't see.

DO *NOT* disturb a tick.

DO *NOT* use tweezers.

DO *NOT* touch the tick to remove it with nail varnish, petroleum jelly, by burning it, house hold tweezers. This stimulates further secretion of toxin, releases allergens/toxins from bite site, ruptures the tick gut (releasing pathogens) and breaks off mouthparts.

ASCIA Recommendations (2014)

Have Allergy (adult ticks):

- Kill the tick where it is.
- Use an ether-containing spray to kill the tick by freezing it.
- Wait for the tick to drop off or remove the tick without squeezing it or its feeding chamber.
- Do this in a safe setting if you have had an allergic reaction previously.
- Use permethrin cream (e.g. Lyclear) or lotion to kill nymphs.

No Allergy (adult ticks):

- Ideally kill the tick where it is.
- Spray with pyrethroid aerosol or dab with permethrin cream.
- Repeat in one minute.
- Wait for the tick to drop off or leave it as long as possible before removing it if removal needed (usually falls off).

Nymph and larval stage ticks:

- Permethrin cream (e.g. Lyclear) or lotion (which is used safely to treat scabies in babies).