HOW TO REDUCE EXPOSURE TO TICKS AND DISEASE

- When entering a grassy or wooded area wear a long sleeve shirt and light colored pants, with the shirt tucked in and pants tucked into the socks.
- Apply repellents to clothing to help keep ticks away from exposed skin.
- Check clothing and skin for ticks after leaving grassy or wooded areas.
- Remove ticks promptly. An infected tick must be attached for several hours before an infection can be transmitted.
- Remove ticks using tweezers or forceps. Grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible and pull with steady pressure. If tweezers are not available tissue paper or paper towels can be used to prevent transmission of any possible infection.
- Do not squeeze or crush the tick. This may spread infected fluids.
- Contact Environmental Health Services with questions or to learn more about ticks and tick-borne diseases.

References and more information:
www.lymenet.org
www.cdc.gov
http://extension.entm.purdue.edu/
www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM2036.pdf
Ticks are arachnids. They have two body parts and eight legs. The life cycle of a tick has four stages: egg, larva, nymph, and adult. Both male and female ticks take blood meals from animals and/or humans. There are about 15 species of ticks found in Indiana. Three species of ticks are of public health importance in Indiana.

*Dermacentor variabilis* or the American dog tick is the tick most people encounter in Indiana. It is found in all 92 Indiana counties. The dog tick is the largest of the three ticks discussed here. The female has a white shield on the back. The back of the male is mottled gray and dark brown. The adults feed on dogs, cats, and humans and are often seen in late April, May, June, and early July. *Dermacentor variabilis* is the primary vector of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF).

*Amblyomma americanum*, the lone star tick, is smaller than the American dog tick but has longer