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Warm Weather Means More Ticks and the Threat of Lyme Disease

Ticks are usually a summer time phenomenon. Now, though, with the weather staying warmer longer, tick season is almost year round. Where there are ticks there is also the threat of lyme disease, for both humans and pets.

Lyme disease is spread through the bites of ticks, most commonly the deer tick, or black-legged tick. They themselves don't cause lyme disease but they do carry the

bacteria that causes it: *Borrelia burgdorferi*. When a tick latches onto a deer, dog, cat or even a human, it releases the bacteria. Deer ticks seem to prefer dogs and other animals but it is possible for cats to become infected, too.

When a tick bites an animal, it can take from 18 hours to two days for the bacteria to transfer to it. That means a tick has to be attached to your cat for that long. The good news is that, because cats are frequent and thorough groomers, they will likely get rid of a tick before it has a chance to be there 18 hours.

Even indoor cats can get exposed to lyme disease if a tick gets carried inside on long pants, socks or another pet. The risk is much lower for them, but it's still there. It's also important to note that your cat cannot give you lyme disease.

If a cat has been bitten by a deer tick, the problem is in detecting any symptoms of lyme disease – they don't always show the clinical signs the way they'd appear in people or dogs. So, as with all things related to a cat's health, owners have to be vigilant! According to [petmd.com](#) here are some signs of lyme disease to look for your cat:

- Stiff walk with an arched back
- Sensitive to touch
- Difficulty breathing
- Fever, lack of appetite, and depression may accompany inflammation of the joints
- Superficial lymph nodes close to the site of the infecting tick bite may be swollen
- Heart abnormalities are reported, but rare; they include complete heart block
- Nervous system complications (rare)

Lyme disease can attack the joints, and some cats might develop lameness that lasts for a few days, then goes away, only to occur again in a different joint weeks later. This condition is called "shifting-leg lameness." A cat will experience swelling in the joint and it could be warm to the touch and painful. In addition to joint pain, if the lyme disease is untreated, cats can develop serious kidney problems leading to kidney failure and permanent tissue damage.

Lyme disease is treatable in cats using antibiotics and it may take more than one round of them to get rid of it. It's also critical to begin treatment quickly. If you're concerned because you've seen a tick bite on your cat, go to your vet immediately. Using a complete blood work-up, urinalysis and reviewing your cat's history, the vet will be able to determine if *Borrelia burgdorferi* bacteria is present. It's also important for the vet to see the tick bite itself, to look for any remnant of the tick that might still be there.

So, keep your cats safe. Be aware, check your cat for ticks and watch for any unusual behavior! It's important to know what your cat's "normal" is and to act fast if you notice something unusual.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the petmed.com article on lyme disease.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read about indoor cats and lyme disease.

Get it Off!
I found a tick - what do I do?

Getting a tick off you or your pet quickly is one way to keep from getting lyme disease. Whether it's on you or your pet, there are certain ways of removing ticks safely and completely. There are also many wrong ways of doing it that can leave part of the tick in the wound or cause other problems.



Our favorite method for removing a tick from a person or cat:

Get a Q-Tip and moisten one end with some oil.
With the oily end of the Q-tip, begin to rub in a circle around and around the tick, agitating it.
Keep rotating it until the tick backs out.
Save the tick for testing, or flush it down the toilet, and toss your Q-tip into the garbage.

There are other methods of tick removal out there, so you have a choice. Another method, suggested by the [Global Lyme Alliance](#) uses tweezers this way:

"Using fine-pointed tweezers, grasp the tick at the place of attachment, as close to the skin as possible.



1. Gently pull the tick straight out with steady, even pressure.
Do not squeeze, twist or jerk the tick. ([Watch this video for removal tips.](#))
2. Do not touch the tick with your bare hands.
3. Wash your hands with soap & water, apply rubbing alcohol or antiseptic to bite site.
4. Place tick in a zippered plastic bag with a moist cotton ball and bring it to your local health department or private lab for testing.
5. If a rash appears, take a photo, write down any symptoms you may have and call/visit your doctor immediately."

Animals present a different set of challenges.

First, they have lots of fur so finding a tick can be tough. Removing a tick can also be tough on a patient that might not be in favor of the whole idea and has four paws with claws to resist. The Q-Tip method, above, is a gentler way to approach it. For another option, [Petbasics.com](#) recommends this process, which also uses tweezers:

- "Prepare for tick removal

Gather your supplies: latex gloves, cat comb, small tweezers, a jar or plastic bag with rubbing alcohol, and a cotton swab. If possible, enlist another person to help hold the cat while you remove the tick.

- Pat the hair down

Wet the cat's hair a bit with rubbing alcohol or water so it can be patted down or parted for better visualization of the tick. Hold the hair back with one hand so you can see it clearly. Know your limits, though: If the tick is in the cat's ear, particularly deep into the ear canal, you may need to take your cat to the vet for removal.

- Remove the tick

With a gloved hand, use the tweezers and grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible. Pull it out firmly without twisting. Avoid quick, jerking movements. You want a slow, methodical pull. Check the tick to make sure you've gotten all of it out of your cat's skin. Ticks can be harder to remove than you might think, and the cat may get tense at this stage.

Sometimes, a tick might break in half during removal, leaving its mouthparts still in the skin of your cat. This is not uncommon. If there is enough of the mouthparts that are still seen and can be grasped by the tweezers, go ahead and try to pull the remaining part out. If this is not the case, or if a good grasp cannot be had, it is best to leave the area alone and let the body work the mouthparts out on its own, just as a splinter does in human skin.

Simply wash the area with warm soapy water and keep an eye on it to make sure it is healing and not becoming red or inflamed. Continual prodding of the area with tweezers, may not only be painful for the cat, it could push the mouth parts further into the skin, causing irritation and potential infection.

Even if the tick is gone, your cat might not be in the clear. Ticks can leave organisms behind in the cat that can make them sick. In the following days and weeks, look for signs of lethargy, jaundice (yellowing of the ears and white parts of the eyes), lack of appetite, or heavy breathing. Alert your vet if you observe any of these.

- Save the tick

Rather than dispose of the tick, place it on a piece of paper, covered with clear tape. Take the paper with the tick to the vet for helpful identification. You can also put the tick in the rubbing alcohol so that it dies.

- Treat your cat

Give your cat a treat for being such a good patient!"

That last point would probably be a good idea whichever method of tick removal you use on your cat! Last resort: If you don't feel comfortable trying to remove a tick from your cat, call your vet right away and they will help you.



The BCR family is full of wonderful people who truly love the cats and we want you to meet them!
Each BCR cat sponsor gets a set of questions to answer and asked to send along
a photo of themselves or with their cat(s).
Are you interested in being in the Sponsor Spotlight? [Email us and let us know!](#)

How did you first learn about BCR?
A simple Google search back in 2015 believe it or not! I was interested in adopting blind and/or special needs kitties and found it for that reason. I then learned BCR is a "furrever" sanctuary and didn't adopt out any of their residents. I also learned of the heroic and wonderful work by Alana and how the sanctuary came to be. I was immensely impressed and wanted to visit immediately! I had to meet these wonderful, loving cats that are oh so special.

Have you visited and, if so, what did you enjoy most? What surprised you most?
Unfortunately that immediate want and desire wasn't able to be fulfilled as I received a job promotion and moved from Seattle, WA, to La Jolla, CA. I'm back in Seattle now (my home) and just haven't had the chance to make the trip to North Carolina. My husband was from North Carolina (he passed away in 2013), and so the location of BCR has special meaning to me. Now with the pandemic travel restrictions, I am not sure when the trip will be, but I am retired now so can make plans soon hopefully!

What surprises me most (even though I haven't had a chance to visit yet), is how well cared for the kitties are. They look so healthy and we're able to see how they are doing in life via the wonderful live cameras. They have a safe, protected, healthy environment where they can live out their years and they are obviously thriving.

If you haven't yet visited, what are you most excited about when you do?
I want dearly to meet the three kitties I sponsor, [Ella](#), [Yoshi](#) and [Marshmallow](#)! As well as all the other cast of characters, too. It will be a challenging trip for me from Seattle as I am partially disabled, but I want very much to help out in some way while I visit. Maybe some kitties need their nails trimmed, or maybe they could just use some companionship? I'm limited physically, but not limited in heart. And that seems to be the case for some of the cats at BCR, too!



Ella



Marshmallow



Yoshi

What cat or cats do you sponsor?

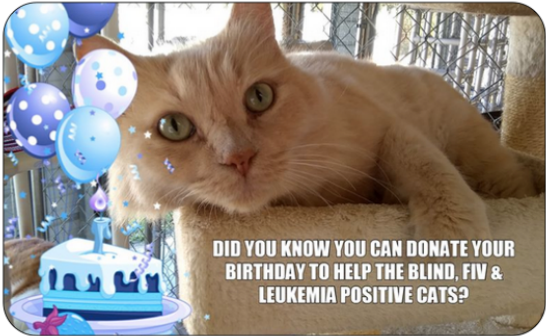
I sponsor Ella, Yoshi and Marshmallow. I have been sponsoring kitties monthly for 3-4 years now in memory of my husband who was a very kind man that loved cats, too! I originally sponsored Griffin, a big beautiful tabby who passed away about a year ago. He had a very unusual story and was originally found as a blind kitten in France. He had definitely made it a long way from there! Once he passed, I learned from Alana that Yoshi (who looks like a smaller version of Griffin), used to curl up with him. So it was only natural that I started sponsoring Yoshi.

Sponsoring Ella came about because of her story and my empathy for what she had been through in life. She was in immense pain with “3 broken vertebrae only being held together by ligaments,” and had a “crazy looking X-ray.” As a woman who has undergone a full spinal reconstruction, with every vertebrae fused except two, I understood her pain and had the same crazy looking X-ray! In addition to all that, she had eye infections and would not see again. My heart absolutely went out to that poor little girl.

I sponsor Marshmallow because he has simply been through the wringer. He was in horrible pain with mats and rotten teeth and is a senior kitty. Since I have a senior kitty at the age of 16 who just went through traumatic dental work and because my other two cats are a blind brother and sister (abandoned in a dumpster with their three siblings who all had eye infections so bad they are blind as well), I had a heartfelt connection with Marshmallow. I can't imagine what it took to get him to a place where he was healthy again and not afraid. And I hear he is friends with Yoshi!

So, the summary for all three? Thanks to the inspirational work of BCR, the transformation to healthy, anxiety and pain-free kitties now is almost unbelievable! I feel some pride (only a little) that my monthly sponsorship dollars helped with that transformation.

If you could tell people one thing about BCR, what would it be?
Sponsor a kitty! The rewards are many and BCR does an exceptional job of letting their sponsors know about the cats, including wonderful photographs and the ability to watch them live anytime! It has added a dimension of joy to my life that is very fulfilling.



Bear Hopes You'll Celebrate Your Birthday for the Cats!

Blow out your birthday candles AND make a BIG impact on the BCR cats' lives! Create a [Facebook birthday donation fundraiser](#). It's so easy and best of all - it's free!

Why do it? Because every birthday donation your friends make helps the cats get the food they need, their medicines and the regular checkups and dental vet visits that keep them healthy. You make it possible for them to continue to have the healthy and happy lives they deserve.

Set up is easy - [use this link to go to Facebook](#) and follow the instructions. You can personalize your message, ask your friends and family to donate to your special cause, set a target, and even monitor how it's going and say thanks when your friends contribute!

Make 2020 the year you donate your birthday to help the cats!
The cats give big HEAD BONKS to those who have donated birthdays so far this year!

The SCOOP

Did you know?



No, it's not Christmas yet, or even Christmas in July!
BUT Tabitha and Izzy want to be prepared when the holidays do get here.

They want to be sure BCR has your most up-to-date mailing address! If you've moved in the last 12 months and have a new physical address or email, [please send it to us](#) before the next holiday season rolls around.

We do not share any personal information with other organizations or individuals.

Separated at Birth?
Not really, but it sure looks like they could be!



Help the BCR Kitties be Top Cats in 2020!



It's easy to do - just let [Great NonProfits](#) know why you love BCR!

Use [THIS LINK](#) to visit our Great NonProfits web page, scroll down to "Share Your Story" and click. When you finish, press "Submit" and they'll send you a confirmation email.

Add your story today and help BCR once again be named a Top-Rated non-profit for the year!

Natasha and the cats thank you very much!



Anniversary Fun Facts!

Every cat that comes to BCR has a forever home. Our pledge is to take care of them all their lives and that they will never be sent to another place again. That pledge extends to when they cross the Rainbow Bridge, too. BCR has lovely memorial gardens around the buildings that have beautiful rose bushes, busy bird feeders and memorial stones for the cats who have died, donated by you! We thank you for helping to remember all the cats who have called BCR home.



The cats are calling you to join Friends of BCR !

A choir of BCR kitties is calling you to join the Friends of BCR Facebook group! You'll find Jackie, Willow, Lisa and Maggie there, along with all the BCR kitties and fellow cat fans! It's not just about BCR - it's about YOU, too! Chat about cats, share stories and photos and find lots of useful cat info! [Join our Friends of Blind Cat Rescue Facebook page today!](#)

BONUS FACEBOOK HINT!
Ever wonder why you don't see BCR in your Facebook feed? Facebook's algorithm changes have made it harder and harder for you to see our posts! [CLICK HERE](#) for some great instructions to make sure you see the BCR cats!

BCR Cats in Action!

*The dedicated BCR staffers spend every day with our very wonderful resident cats, seeing them play, learning about their personalities and finding out what they love! We want you to see what they see so we hope you enjoy these video clips of the BCR cats in action - doing what they do best! To view a video, just click where it says **CLICK HERE** or on the photos and sample life with the BCR cats!*



[Seven](#) is a smart kitty who loves his "veggies," especially with a little catnip on the side! [CLICK HERE](#) to see Seven enjoying them!



[Rudy](#) loves a good game of soccer and he's pretty good at it! Be sure to yell Scoooooooooore! when Rudy gets a goal! [CLICK HERE](#) to watch Rudy in action!



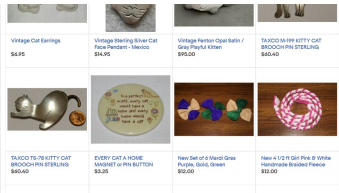
Thanks to those posting #BCRCatsAfterDark!
It's great to see what our favorite felines are up to after hours! If you capture some action be sure to grab a shot or video and post them on the [Friends of BCR Facebook page](#) with the hashtag #BCRCatsAfterDark.

Get started on our 24-hour Zmodo Cameras! [CLICK HERE](#) to find them!

Helping the cats is EZ!

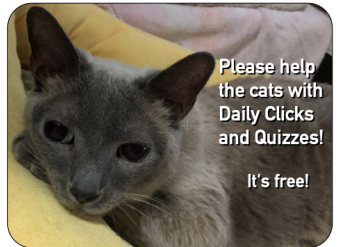


We LOVE our ebay sellers! When you purchase from one of our great sellers on ebay, they donate a portion of the sale

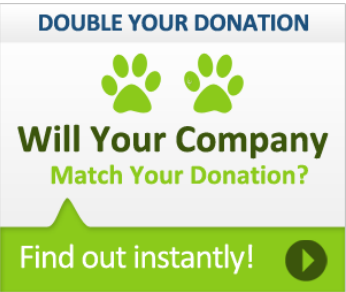


back to us! Have a wedding or a baby shower coming up?
[Try ebay!](#)

Are You an ebay Seller who supports BCR?
Please let us know so we can thank you and shine some light on your special ebay auction page! [Just email us](#) and we'll be in touch with you!



A few free clicks each day can help the BCR cats! [CLICK HERE](#) to go to the ShopforYourCause website and start with the daily click, that gives 2 cents to BCR! Then take a quiz or two to add to that donation!



Matching gifts are a great way to [double your BCR donation!](#)



When you shop online, please [use Amazon Smile](#) and pick Blind Cat Rescue as your charity. With every purchase, their foundation donates to BCR. There is no charge to you!

Direct link: <https://goo.gl/4DJHX2>



No need to hang on to your old car! Donate it and help the cats! If you have an old car, truck, van, SUV, boat, motorcycle, ATV, RV, trailer or even an airplane, you can donate it BCR. [Find out how here.](#)

We thank those who have already donated a car this year!



Are you an Alexa user? Did you know that you can **make charitable donations using Alexa**? It's true. It's very easy and secure! All you have to say is: Alexa, make a donation to Blind Cat Rescue! She'll take it from there. Need more information on how this works? [CLICK HERE.](#)



Are you a runner, walker or biker? You can get your daily exercise, track your route and help the BCR cats at the same time! Sponsored by [BestFriends](#), ResQwalk is a free app you can put on any phone.



Check out our very own cat-tastic dedicated site, [BCR on YouTube](#) - the home channel for the latest kitty videos, helpful cat-care hints, shelter tours and boxes sessions and even the history of BCR and its resident cats.



For all things cats - [follow BCR on Pinterest!](#) From DIY cat projects to articles and stories on cat health to cat tattoos and just fun photos, you'll find it all here!



Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure the health of the staff, BCR is not open to visitors at this time.

The May and June Open Houses have been canceled.

Elvira is on the edge of her seat waiting to see her friends at BCR's July Open House on

Saturday, July 11
noon - 4 p.m.

Important Reminder!

Please remember to add blindcat@blindcatrescue.com to your email "safe" list so we don't wind up in your Junk Mail box!



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