



Safety notice

Flinders Island Spotted Fever (information extracted from *The Mercury*, 12 July 2019 and ASCIA)

Flinders Island Spotted Fever was found in Tasmania's Midlands in July this year for the first time.

Spotted Fever is a rare bacterial illness that is transmitted to people from ticks found on reptiles. There were 18 notified cases of the infection acquired in [Tasmania between 2012 and 2017](#). Cases have occurred on Flinders Island, Schouten Island, around Great Oyster Bay, and now new confirmed cases in the Midlands.

Most cases occurred in the summer and were more common in people who spent time outdoors camping, bushwalking or working in the bush.

Symptoms: Include a fever, headaches, joint pains and a rash.

Treatment: See your GP who may prescribe medication.

To avoid infection: DHHS advise applying insect repellent to prevent tick bites and wearing long protective clothing. These measures will also prevent mosquito bites that can also carry other infections such as Ross River Virus and Barmah Forest Virus.



[Flinders Island Spotted Fever](#) [DHHS Fact Sheet](#)

The Australian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) tick [Fact Sheet 2019](#) states:

First aid for tick bites:

- Freeze the tick, using a product that rapidly freezes and kills the tick, and allow it to drop off. In most cases ether-containing sprays will kill the tick within five minutes, and it will drop off the skin. Published studies show that safe and fast removal of the tick may reduce the possibility of becoming allergic to ticks. It may also reduce the risk of getting a tick-borne infectious disease, or developing tick paralysis.
- If the tick does not drop off, or you can't freeze the tick, leave the tick in place and seek urgent medical assistance to remove the tick.
- Do not scratch anything you can't see if you live or work in a tick-endemic area.
- Know how to manage allergic reactions (including anaphylaxis) to tick bites. It is unsafe to insert fine tweezers between the skin and the tick mouthpiece and lever the tick out. This does not prevent tick allergy or anaphylaxis, and therefore ASCIA advises against this method.

Reference: 2017 Technical Report [review by Dr Gabriela Willis](#).

For more information contact:
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Image from *The Mercury*: Flinders Island Spotted Fever is transmitted to humans by the bite of ticks found on reptiles including blue-tongued lizards and snakes.

