

Letter from the Industrial Physician



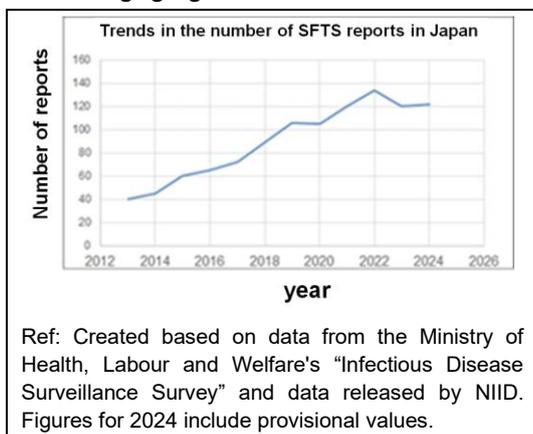
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Invisible but ever-present: Beware of ticks!

With the recent heat wave, it has become a season that can easily drain your energy. During this time, it is important to be aware not only of heatstroke but also of the health risks posed by ticks. While ticks are often associated with indoor environments, there are also different types of ticks that inhabit outdoor areas, each of which can cause distinct health issues (see table). Health risks from ticks vary depending on the season and location. Especially in summer, indoor ticks can cause allergies and bites, while outdoor ticks, such as deer ticks, can transmit infections, all of which can affect our health in various ways. Recently, there has been an increase in deer tick-related incidents domestically, so caution is advised (Figure).

Indoors, high humidity can lead to the proliferation of dust mites and scabies mites. To prevent this, it is effective to maintain indoor humidity below 50% and regularly wash and clean bedding, carpets, and other fabric items. Outdoors, tick bites are a concern. Ticks inhabit forests and grassy areas and can transmit life-threatening infections such as Severe Fever with Thrombocytopenia Syndrome (SFTS). When engaging in outdoor activities, wear long sleeves, long pants, and a hat to avoid exposing your



skin, and take a shower and change clothes promptly upon returning home. Additionally, if you have pets such as dogs or cats, it is essential to take precautions against ticks by using tick prevention medications and paying attention to the animals.

By being mindful of tick prevention measures appropriate for both indoor and outdoor environments, you can effectively reduce the risk of allergies and infections. Start with the steps you can take in your daily life.

Type	Characteristics	Health Effects
Common Indoor Mites		
House Dust Mites	Abundant in bedding, carpets, and sofas	Their droppings and remains can trigger allergies, asthma, and atopic dermatitis
Predatory Mites	Feed on other mites, often found in tatami mats and wooden flooring	Can cause skin rashes and itching from bites
Tropical Rat Mites	Parasitize rats and invade homes	Bites cause fever, rash, and itching
Problematic Outdoor Mites		
Ticks (e.g., Haemaphysalis longicornis)	Found in grassy fields and forests, attach to humans and animals	Can transmit SFTS (Severe Fever with Thrombocytopenia Syndrome) and other serious infections