



## Tick-Borne Babesia

Babesia is transmitted through the bite of an infected tick. Transmission is predominant in the Northeast and upper Midwest. Risk for Babesia is particularly high during the spring and summer. Infected people may not notice a tick bite as they are the size of a poppy seed.

### How Babesia is Transmitted

Ticks that spread Babesia must be attached to a person for more than 36-48 hours to transmit the parasite. Babesia is not contagious.

### Signs & Symptoms

Many infected people will not experience any symptoms; those who do will experience flu-like symptoms such as fever, chills and headache.

Babesia can be severe and life-threatening for those who:

- Do not have a spleen
- Have a weak immune system
- Are elderly

### Prevention

The use of prevention measures is especially important for people at increased risk for severe babesiosis. Avoiding exposure to tick habitats is the best defense.

### Treatment

There is no vaccine to prevent or medication to treat WNV. Travelers should avoid mosquito bites by:

### Donating Blood? Here's What You Need to Know!

Babesia is a parasite that infects red blood cells. It is considered a transfusion transmitted disease. Donors will be deferred due to a positive history of Babesia or positive test result. Deferral will last for at least 2 years from the date of positive test. Requalification may occur if the donor meets all requalification criteria.

Reference:

1. Guidance for Industry pertaining to recommendations for reducing the risk of transfusion-transmitted Babesiosis. [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)
2. Center for Disease Control (CDC) [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

### Test Used to Screen Donated Blood

Infectious Disease Pathogen	Babesia
Laboratory Test Used	Nucleic acid amplification testing (NAT) and antibody for <i>B. microti</i>
Frequency of Test	Performed on donations in Babesia-endemic regions