

Nurse's Notes - June 2026

I have some fond memories of the years we lived in Texas. (As they used to say, "Texas is a whole other country!") But I am definitely NOT fond of the Lone Star Tick. I wish it had stayed in Texas.



I'm sure you've heard about the Alpha-Gal Syndrome (AGS) caused by the bite of this tiny interloper. The Centers for Disease Control & Management (CDC) estimates that 450,000 people in the US may already be affected by it. Alpha-gal is not a reportable disease, meaning physicians do not have to report cases. So estimates are all we have at this point. But experts all agree the condition is burgeoning in the south and central US. ***At least two members of our CrossRoads family are suffering the effects of a Lonestar tick bite. They will testify to the miseries the tiny critter causes. So let's learn more about it.***

Alphagalactose is a molecule found in most mammals such as cows and pigs, but not in humans. AGS is a potentially life-threatening allergy to alpha-gal that can develop after the bite of an infected tick—a very tiny tick as you can see. The one pictured above is on a blade of grass! The white spot marks the Lone Star tick you want to avoid.

People with AGS can have life-threatening allergic reactions after eating red meat or being exposed to products containing alpha-gal. They must carry epi-pens to be prepared to treat anaphylactic shock should it happen. This is a very serious situation.

Your best protection: avoid tick bites. Ticks live in grassy, brushy, wooded areas—possibly even your own yard. What can you do to keep yourself safe?

- Try to keep fence lines clear of leaf litter, taller grass and bushy plants.
- Use EPA-approved insect repellants.
- Protect your pets if they go outside. Check them daily for their safety and yours.

Let's continue to enjoy this summer, CrossRoadians, but be aware of that little vagrant tick among us!