

**CDC Division of Vector-Borne Diseases**  
**Strategic Communications Around Vector-Borne Diseases: Sample Messaging for Testing**  
Updated: December 14, 2023

**Outdoor Enthusiasts: Alpha-gal Syndrome**

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| <b>Headline</b> | Did You Know? Ticks can cause alpha-gal syndrome, an allergy to meat products.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Copy</b>     | <p>Alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), a potentially life-threatening allergy to red meat, is triggered by tick bites, most commonly lone star ticks which are found in Southeast, Central, and Mid-Atlantic states.</p> <p>AGS reactions happen after people eat red meat or are exposed to other products containing alpha-gal, a molecule found in most mammals. Symptoms can include difficulty breathing or vomiting.</p> <p>What is the one way to prevent AGS? Prevent tick bites. Learn how.</p> <p>#FighttheBite #RecognizeAGS #CDC #PublicHealth</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Copy</b>     | <p>Have you heard of alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), also called tick bite meat allergy? Some tick bites can cause an allergy to alpha-gal, a molecule in beef, pork, lamb, and venison. People with AGS can have a serious allergic response, such as hives or upset stomach, after eating red meat or other foods which contain alpha-gal.</p> <p>Learn more: <a href="https://bit.ly/469yTZv">https://bit.ly/469yTZv</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Messages</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cases of alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), also called “red meat allergy,” rose 41% in just four years. While there is no known cure, the best way to protect yourself from AGS is to prevent tick bites. Learn more.</li><li>• Lyme disease isn’t the only tick-borne illness out there. Preventing tick bites can also protect you against alpha-gal syndrome.</li><li>• Bug spray, long pants, and regular tick checks are all ways to prevent tick bites and avoid serious condition like alpha-gal syndrome.</li><li>• Did you know that a tick bite can lead to a serious condition called alpha-gal syndrome? It can cause an allergy to red meat and a host of other serious, and potentially life-threatening, symptoms. Keep yourself safe by taking steps to avoid tick bites.</li><li>• Alpha-gal syndrome is a serious, potentially life-threatening allergic condition that is caused by tick bites. Learn more about the habits that can keep you and your loved ones safe [link to list of personal preventative behaviors].</li><li>• Alpha-gal syndrome (AGS) is associated with tick bites. Evidence suggests that AGS is primarily associated with the bite of a lone star tick in the United States, but other kinds of ticks have not been ruled out. Talk to your doctor about how you can help prevent tick bites.</li></ul> |

**Healthcare Providers: Alpha-Gal Syndrome**

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| <b>Headline</b> | Alpha-gal syndrome (AGS) is a rare but serious allergic reaction to meat products triggered by a tick bite. Preventing tick bites is the only way to prevent AGS.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Copy</b>     | <p>HCPs: Alpha-gal syndrome (AGS) can be triggered by tick bites in your area. Recognize the signs and symptoms and encourage your patients to take tick bite preventive measures.</p> <p>AGS (also called alpha-gal allergy, red meat allergy, or tick bite meat allergy) is a serious, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction. Growing evidence suggests that this reaction may be triggered by the bite of lone star ticks in the United States, but other kinds of ticks have not been ruled out.</p> <p>Symptoms typically appear 2–6 hours after eating meat or dairy products, or after exposure to products containing alpha-gal (such as gelatin-coated medications). People with AGS may not have an allergic reaction after every alpha-gal exposure.</p> <p>Learn more about alpha-gal syndrome and talk to your patients about preventing tick bites.</p> <p>#CDC #PublicHealth</p>                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Messages</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alpha-gal syndrome is a serious, potentially life-threatening allergic condition.</li> <li>• Alpha-gal syndrome (AGS) is associated with tick bites. Evidence suggests that AGS is primarily associated with the bite of a lone star tick in the United States, but other kinds of ticks have not been ruled out.</li> <li>• Preventing tick bites is important and may reduce your patient’s chances of developing alpha-gal syndrome.</li> <li>• Discussing tick-bite prevention strategies with your patients can help them avoid alpha-gal syndrome.</li> <li>• Although alpha-gal syndrome is rare, it is a serious and potentially life-threatening condition. Know high-risk areas and activities, the signs and symptoms, and have a conversation with your patients about ways to protect themselves.</li> <li>• Learning more about alpha-gal syndrome, especially if you or your patients live in a high-risk area, can help you recognize the condition and give your patients the correct information to protect their health.</li> </ul> |