



Health Division Urges Precautions Against Ticks

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For Immediate Release



HEALTH DIVISION

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NEWS RELEASE

L. BROOKS PATTERSON, OAKLAND COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Leigh-Anne Stafford, MSA
Health Officer

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PONTIAC, Mich., May 25, 2017 – Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson and Oakland County Health Division remind residents to protect themselves against ticks as they spend more time outside. Ticks and tick-borne diseases are increasing across the state. Ticks spread diseases such as Lyme disease, an illness caused by a bacterial infection from a tick bite.

“Residents are urged to protect themselves against Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases,” said Leigh-Anne Stafford, health officer for the Oakland County Health Division. “If Lyme disease is diagnosed promptly, it can be treated with antibiotics. If someone is experiencing flu-like symptoms, muscle and joint pain, dizziness, and/or a bulls-eye rash, they need to seek medical attention.”

According to Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, there were 221 reported human cases of Lyme disease in Michigan in 2016, and several cases have been reported already this year. Ticks travel on their hosts and can be found in many places outdoors, including parks and backyards. Using precaution in areas most likely to be infested with ticks, such as wooded or grassy areas (especially where deer and other wildlife are present), is the best way to avoid potential infection. Reduce your risk

by:

- Wearing long-sleeved shirts; light-colored, long pants; and closed-toed shoes.
- Tucking shirts into pants and pants into socks.
- Applying insect repellent containing DEET (20% - 30%) or Picaridin to exposed skin and to clothing.
- Applying permethrin to clothes and shoes (do not apply permethrin to skin).

Check your entire body for ticks immediately after leaving outdoor areas likely to have ticks, and take a hot shower as soon as possible. Help children check their bodies for ticks. Ticks can also enter your home on pets, so check your pets often. If you discover a tick attached to your skin:

- Grasp the tick with tweezers as close to the skin as possible.
- Pull gently but firmly, but do not squeeze the body of the tick.
- Try to pull the tick out without leaving mouth parts embedded in the skin.
- After removing the tick, wash hands and bite area thoroughly with soap and running water.
- Apply an antibacterial cream to the site of the bite.

For more information on Lyme disease, visit www.oakgov.com/health or find Public Health Oakland on Facebook and Twitter @publichealthOC.

For Media Inquiries Only: Contact Leigh-Anne Stafford, health officer for Oakland County Health Division, at 248-858-1410.



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