



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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May 25, 2018, Pontiac, Mich. – Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson and Oakland County Health Division remind residents to protect themselves against ticks as they spend more time outside. Lyme disease is an illness caused by a bacterial infection transmitted by a tick bite. According to Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), there were more than 300 reported human cases of Lyme disease in Michigan in 2017.

“Residents are urged to protect themselves against Lyme disease and other tickborne diseases by avoiding tick bites.” said Leigh-Anne Stafford, health officer for the Oakland County Health Division. “If you find a tick attached to your body, quickly remove it, watch for symptoms, and contact a medical provider if you experience symptoms.”

Symptoms include fever, rash, muscle and joint pain, dizziness, and/or a bulls-eye rash. Treatment in the early stages of Lyme disease usually leads to complete recovery.

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**).
- Avoiding contact with overgrown grass, brush and leaf litter.
- Protecting your pets as well, as they can come into contact with ticks and carry them into your home.

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. 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.

Michigan citizens can submit ticks to MDHHS for identification and possible Lyme disease testing, free of charge. Residents can also send electronic photos of ticks to the MDHHS for identification to MDHHS-Bugs@michigan.gov. For more information on how to submit your tick and/or photos, visit Michigan.gov/lyme.

For more information on Lyme disease, visit www.oakgov.com/health or find Public Health Oakland on Facebook and Twitter @publichealthOC. Nurse on Call is available at 800-848-5533 or noc@oakgov.com, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

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