

Health Unit Media Release

September 24, 2013



Be Tick Smart during the Hunting Season

Hunting season is upon us and the **Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit would like to remind those enjoying hunting activities to be aware that they also share the great outdoors with ticks that can make them sick.** Lyme disease is caused by being bitten by an infected tick. In Leeds, Grenville and Lanark, we have several different types of ticks. Lyme disease is caused by the bite of an infected black-legged tick (also known as deer ticks). There is an increasing number of areas where ticks carrying Lyme disease are found. Lyme disease is regularly found within our geographic area of Leeds, Grenville and Lanark.

A tick must be attached to you for at least 24-36 hours in order to transmit Lyme disease. An unfed tick indicates that the tick was attached for less than 24 hours, therefore, even if the tick did carry the bacteria it could not have transmitted Lyme disease because it was not attached long enough.

What can you do to minimize your exposure to ticks?

- **Wear light coloured, long sleeved shirts and long pants.** For extra protection, tuck your pants into your socks. Use bug repellent containing DEET. Read the manufacturer's instructions before applying the repellent on yourself or children.
- **When you return from the outdoors, check your entire body thoroughly for ticks.**
- **If you find an attached tick, remove it promptly using a pair of tweezers.** Grasp the tick's head and mouth parts as close to the skin as possible and pull it straight out gently, but firmly. Avoid twisting or squeezing the tick during removal. Quick removal of a tick will prevent you from getting lyme disease.

Watch for signs of infection following a tick bite.

Bites from ticks infected with Lyme disease may create a bull's-eye-like rash. The appearance of this rash is a sure sign of a tick bite and you should see your health care provider. The "bull's eye" rash will occur within one to three weeks after the bite, but can range from 3 days to one month. If you experience any of the following symptoms: a red bulls-eye rash, fever, headache, muscle and joint pain, fatigue and a skin rash, contact your health care provider.

For further information on Lyme Disease, please contact the Health Unit at 613-345-5685 or our Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853 or visit www.healthunit.org. You can also like our facebook page for important public health updates.