

MEDIA RELEASE

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Change in Tick submissions to the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit

For the past several years we have relied on the analysis of ticks submitted by residents and health care providers to tell us the prevalence of ticks that are positive for the bacteria that causes Lyme Disease. This approach has worked well and we now have a good sense of where the positive tick populations currently reside. Continuing to study ticks from areas we know about is not necessary; therefore, we would like to concentrate resources in areas where the ticks may become established.

As of July 1, 2014, we will no longer accept ticks at our Health Unit sites.

Our surveillance program will consist of an active surveillance strategy where we will look for and collect ticks from areas where they may be emerging.

The change in how surveillance is done will not affect clinical care. Testing of ticks was not intended for the purpose of diagnosing disease; rather it was a tool for surveillance. Even if the tick was positive for the bacteria, it did not mean the tick transmitted the bacteria to the individual. The length of time the tick is attached is a key factor in the transmission of Lyme disease.

Reminder: If a tick is attached for longer than 24 hours, and removed within the past 72 hours then it is important to contact a health care provider.

We appreciate the assistance of the public over the past years in this surveillance project. For more information on Lyme disease, visit the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit web site at www.healthunit.org

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Contact: Paula Stewart, MD, FRCPC, Medical Officer of Health, 613-345-5685