

May 5, 2015

Lyme Disease and Ticks...What do you need to know

Now that day time temperatures are above 4°C, ticks have once again become active. Please remember to be tick smart. Dressing in light coloured clothing makes adult ticks and nymphs (small stage of the tick), easier to see when they are on you. **Always** remember to do a tick check when you return inside. Thoroughly check your body for ticks and nymphs and promptly remove and dispose of them. Have someone check you from behind if possible or take a quick shower to help remove any unattached ticks. Putting your clothes in a hot dryer for several minutes has been found to kill ticks.

It is important to know that Lyme disease transmission depends on the length of time the tick is attached. If the tick or nymph is removed within 24 hours of when it may have attached to you, then you have a minimal risk of acquiring Lyme disease. If the tick or nymph has been attached for longer than 24 hours and does carry the bacteria, you are at an increased risk of getting Lyme disease. When a tick has been attached to you greater than 24 hours and it looks like it has fed and is enlarged, it is recommended that you contact your health care provider and advise them of this. Remember, ***not all ticks carry the bacteria***. Tick submissions to the health unit are ***no longer accepted*** as this was for surveillance only.

If you have been bitten by a tick, watch for symptoms of Lyme disease: bulls eye rash around a bite area, headache, fever and muscle/joint pain. Consult your doctor if you experience any of these symptoms.

For more information about ticks and Lyme disease:

- Visit <http://www.healthunit.org/hazards/documents/lyme.htm>
- Call the Health Unit's Health ACTION Line at 1-800-660-5853
- Email us at contact@healthunit.org
- Like us on Facebook and Follow us on Twitter (@LGLHealthunit) for important public health updates

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