



For Healthy Living in Eastern and Northern Maine Communities

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Learn about Lyme Disease



Lyme disease is caused by bacteria transmitted to humans by infected blacklegged ticks (also known as deer ticks). Symptoms include: fever, headache, fatigue, and a characteristic skin rash. If left untreated, infection can spread to joints, the heart and the nervous system.

Cases of Lyme Disease have risen steadily in Maine from approximately 175 reported cases in 2003 to nearly 1,000 in 2009.

Lyme disease is diagnosed based on symptoms, physical findings (rash) and the possibility of being exposed to infectious ticks. Most cases of Lyme disease can be successfully treated with a few weeks of antibiotics. Follow these steps to prevent Lyme disease:

- Use insect repellent with 20- 30% DEET on exposed skin and clothing.
- Use Permethrin (another type of insect repellent) on clothes only. One spray is usually good for several washings.
- Avoid wooded and bushy areas or areas with a lot of leaves—where ticks might live.
- If you do enter a tick area, walk in the center of the trail to avoid contact with overgrown grass, brush, and leaf litter. Be sure to cover skin with long pants, long sleeves, long socks and tuck your pants into your shoes.
- Check yourself, your children and pets for ticks daily after playing outside. Check closely in the folds of knees and elbows; along hairlines, behind your ears and other spots that tend to stay dark and damp.
- If you find a tick remove it promptly with tweezers and contact your healthcare provider. The bite area should be cleaned with warm, soapy water and followed by rubbing alcohol or antibiotic ointment. - if a tick has been on your body for less than 24 hours your chance of getting Lyme disease is small, so act fast.

For more information visit: www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/Lyme/

Dogs and Cars

As warm weather approaches, please remember your four-footed, furry friends. Don't leave your animals in a hot car even for a few minutes.

Temperatures inside a vehicle can reach as high as 120 degrees on a 78-degree day; 160 degrees on a 90-day. Animals can suffer brain damage or death from heatstroke in just 15 minutes. If you see a dog in distress in a vehicle, call your local police department.



It's Mosquito Season!



Along with lots of outdoor fun, summer in Maine can also mean lots of mosquitoes. Mosquito bites can be more than just

annoying; they can spread disease too. Because two viruses that are spread by infected mosquitoes have been found in a small number of horses and birds in Maine it's important to protect against mosquito bites to avoid being infected by these viruses.

West Nile Virus (WNV) Symptoms

WNV may have no symptoms at all. Others who are infected may experience fever, headache, tiredness, and body aches, occasionally with a skin rash (on the trunk of the body) and swollen lymph glands.

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) Symptoms

Symptoms range from mild flu-like illness to swelling and inflammation of the brain which occurs in about one-third of the cases and can be deadly. No human cases have been reported in Maine yet, but several cases have been reported in New Hampshire.

Protect yourself

The best way to protect yourself from mosquito-borne disease is to protect yourself from mosquito bites.

- Use insect repellent when outdoors. Make sure the repellent contains the chemical DEET. Read the product instructions carefully and keep repellent away from the eyes and mouth.
- Wear clothing that fully covers your arms, legs and feet. Wear light-colored clothing, mosquitoes are attracted to dark and bright colors.
- Avoid using fragrances or scented lotions that may attract mosquitoes.
- Avoid outdoor activities during peak mosquito hours from dusk until dawn.
- Install screens on the windows in your home and repair screens with rips or tears.
- Mosquitoes lay their eggs in water, so regularly get rid of any standing water around your home.

Too Much Salt Can Be Risky

On average, people eat much more salt than they should. It can drive up blood pressure and increase the risk for stroke and heart disease. Most American eat more than double the recommended amount of salt. It can come from places other than the salt shaker. Most of the salt we eat - almost 80% - comes from packaged, processed and store-bought food and from restaurant meals (including fast food).

To reduce your salt intake, try the following:

- Read food labels, eat more fresh fruits and vegetables and look for low sodium alternatives.
- Cut down on salt gradually, over a few weeks or even months. You'll be less likely to notice a difference.
- Snack on fresh fruits and vegetables instead of salty chips and popcorn.
- Try ½ teaspoon of salt when recipes call for 1 teaspoon.
- Be aware that some seasonings like adobo, garlic salt and lemon pepper contain salt.
- Create your own salt-free seasonings using oregano, basil, celery seed, curry powder, cayenne pepper or other herbs and spices to add flavor.
- Many salt substitutes contain potassium. If you are taking medications regularly or have kidney disease, talk to your doctor before using a salt substitute.

Most Sodium Comes from Processed and Restaurant Foods

