



Allegan County Public Health Newsletter

Public Health Updates

Volume 2, Issue 2
June, 2013

TICK SEASON IS HERE!

Tick Season is here!!

If you are going to an area infested by ticks there are several things you can do to protect yourself:

Wear light colored clothes making ticks easier to spot.

Wear long sleeved shirts and pants tucked into socks or boots to prevent ticks from getting on your skin.

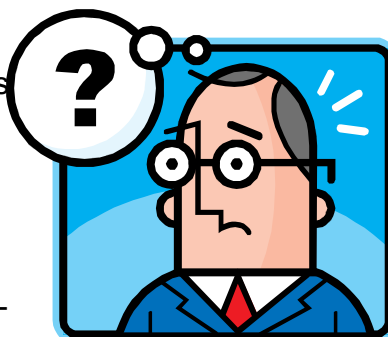
Wear boots or shoes not sandals as ticks are usually located close to the ground.

Apply insect repellants containing DEET to your clothing and skin; apply DEET according to label guidelines.

Deer ticks can cause Lyme Disease which is growing in Allegan County. (more info on pg 2.)

For more information on tick identification, prevention and removal go to michigan.gov/emergingdiseases and click on Lyme Disease

Ask Dr. T! Our Medical Director Dr. Tooker has a blog that allows you to directly ask him questions. You can access his blog from our webpage www.allegancounty.org/health



Inside this issue:

Tick Season	1
Lyme Disease Update	2
Vaccine Update	3
Fireworks Safety Month	4
Facebook Page	4

interest:

- Have you had your house checked for radon? The health department has radon kits available for 15 dollars. Call 269-673-5411 for more information.
- Did you know that Allegan County has a facebook page that is updated at least weekly with public health issues specific to Allegan County?





Do you know what ticks carry the Lyme disease? Do you know the symptoms of Lyme Disease? Do you know how to reduce your risk of exposure to ticks? Check out articles on page 1 and 2!!!

Signs of Lyme disease:

Bulls eye rash
Headaches
Nausea
A spreading rash
Aching joints
Fatigue



Lyme Disease in Allegan County?

LYME DISEASE RISK IS GROWING IN ALLEGAN COUNTY

Richard M Tooker MD, MPH

Medical Director, Allegan County Health Department

For the last ten years the risk of getting Lyme Disease in Allegan County has increased. Deer migrating from areas of the Southern Lake Michigan shore line have brought blacklegged ticks along with them. Now there are established populations of this deer tick which are responsible for the spread of Lyme Disease to people. **NOT ALL TICKS CARRYING LYME DISEASE!!!!** Visit the websites below to see pictures of blacklegged ticks!

Blacklegged ticks also need small animals for their life cycle such as white footed mice and chipmunks – both of which are plentiful in Allegan County. Add certain sandy soils and low vegetation like grasses or bushes and now you have the recipe for place where people can become infected with the Lyme Disease bacteria.

If an infected deer tick attaches to a person's skin the Lyme bacteria called *Borrelia burgdorferi* (Bd) may be transferred as the tick withdraws blood. A local infection results and may be obvious by a bulls eye looking rash (although not everyone has this). If the infection is not treated with effective antibiotics, people may develop;

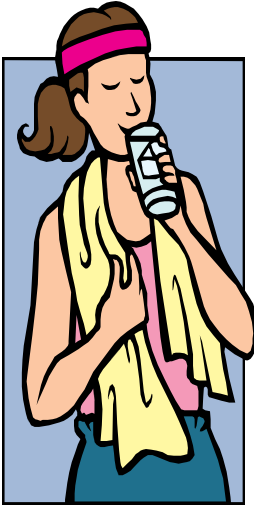
Headaches
Nausea
Fever
A spreading rash
Aching joints and muscles
Fatigue

These symptoms may go away or may return on and off over many weeks or months and involve the heart and nervous system as well. If still untreated, some infected people will develop chronic Lyme Disease with painful arthritis of the joints nerve and brain function changes and heart problems. The key to recovery therefore is to be aware of possible Lyme Disease and get the necessary testing and treatment.

Even better, is knowing how to prevent Lyme Disease because anyone may become exposed to infected deer ticks (Lyme disease is not spread by common wood ticks or dog ticks). These are ways to stay safe from infection; check out page 1 of this newsletter on Ticks.

Remember to protect children and keep in mind that pets can get Lyme Disease so check with your veterinarian about tick repellents. Enjoy Allegan County's beautiful outdoors but do it safely!

For more information check out; www.lyme.org or www.michigan.gov/lymedisease or call; 1-860-870-0070



WORKING TOWARDS A HEALTHIER YOU!

Did you know that losing just 10% of your body weight can make significant improvements to both your physical and mental health. A 10% weight loss for those who are overweight can:

- Improve blood pressure
- Lower cholesterol levels
- Improve heart health
- Decrease risk of Type 2 diabetes
- Strengthen the immune system
- Decrease back and joint pain
- Improve breathing and sleep
- Increase energy and stamina
- Improve mood and self-confidence



Visit the website below to sign up for free emails, recipes, and tips towards becoming healthier. Let's make Michigan's obesity and overweight rates drop. **Allegan County's overweight/obesity rate is currently at 69%!!**

www.michigan.gov/mihealthiertomorrow or

www.facebook.com/mihealthiertomorrow

Sign up now to a healthier you and Michigan!!



Immunizations for School!

You may wonder whether your young child who is ready to enter school in September will need any vaccines.

Typically, children who are 4-6 years of age receive additional doses of DTaP, IPV, MMR, and Varicella vaccine.

If you are feeling comfortable that this is an important and necessary thing to do, your child will also be more comfortable.

Be honest with your child, explaining that it may hurt a bit, but it will not be for long. Also explain that the vaccine will keep him or her healthy.

It is better to call your child's doctor or call the health department in the Spring rather than wait until August to try to get an appointment for immunizations.

Making sure that children of all ages receive all their vaccinations on time is one of the most important things parents can do to ensure their children's long-term health — as well as the health of friends, classmates, and others in the community.

Additional information can be found at this website:

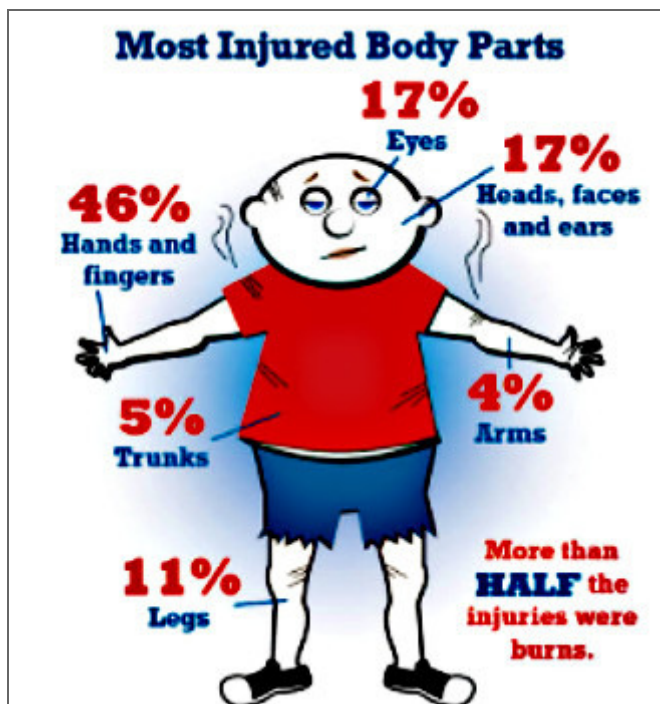
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/index.html>

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE UPDATE!

Do you know what communicable diseases are reported in Allegan County and the trends? If not visit our website to review ! It is updated monthly at http://www.allegancounty.org/docs/HD/ED/HDED_CommunicableDiseases.pdf

Get when to stay home info @ http://www.allegancounty.org/docs/HD/PH/HDPH_Brochure_When-to-stay-home.pdf

FIREWORKS SAFETY MONTHS JUNE/JULY!



TIPS FOR SAFELY USING FIREWORKS!

1. Make sure fireworks are legal in your area before buying or using them.
2. Never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks. Parents may not realize that young children suffer injuries from sparklers. Sparklers burn at temperatures of about 2,000 degrees—hot enough to melt some metals.
3. Always have an adult closely supervise fireworks activities if older children are allowed to handle devices.
4. Avoid buying fireworks that are packaged in brown paper because this is often a sign that the fireworks were made for professional displays and that they could pose a danger to consumers.
5. Never place any part of your body directly over a fireworks device when lighting the fuse. Back up to a safe distance immediately after lighting fireworks.
6. Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose handy in case of fire or other mishap.
7. Never try to relight or handle malfunctioning fireworks. Soak them with water and throw them away.
8. Never point or throw fireworks at another person.
9. Light fireworks one at a time, and then move back quickly.
10. Never carry fireworks in a pocket or shoot them off in metal or glass containers.
11. After fireworks complete their burning, douse the spent device with plenty of water from a bucket or hose before discarding it to prevent a trash fire.



Find Us On  **facebook**

Find us on facebook ...Like us to get public health updates about Allegan County.