



Weekly Safety Meeting

Your Safety Is Our Business®

Volume 1, Issue 14

April 6th, 2014

Lyme Disease Safety

Lyme disease is a serious tick-borne illness that can cause chronic muscle pain, inflammatory arthritis, heart disease, and/or neurological disorders. Because the disease can be long term and debilitating, early recognition and diagnosis is important so that it can be successfully treated with antibiotics.

Lyme disease is transmitted to humans by black-leg ticks. These ticks, which are more abundant in spring and early summer than other times of the year, are smaller than common dog or cattle ticks so they can easily go unnoticed. When possible, avoid tick habitats such as brushy or overgrown grassy and wooded areas and reduce tick and host (deer and rodent) habitats by removing leaves, tall grass, and brush from around work areas.

The diagnosis of Lyme disease is primarily based on a known exposure and recognition of disease symptoms. Flu-like symptoms may include a fever, lymph node swelling, neck stiffness, generalized fatigue, headaches, migrating joint aches, and/or muscle aches. In addition to these symptoms, Lyme Disease is often, but not always, characterized by a 'bull's-eye' rash.

Ticks can spread disease, including Lyme disease. Protect yourself:

- Use insect repellent that contains no less than 30% DEET.
- Wear clothing that has been treated with permethrin.
- Take a shower as soon as you can after working outdoors.
- Look for ticks on your body. Ticks can hide under the armpits, behind the knees, in the hair, and in the groin.
- Put your clothes in the dryer on high heat for 60 minutes to kill any remaining ticks.

Ticks can attach to any part of the human body but are often found in hard-to-see areas such as the groin, armpits, and scalp. In most cases, the tick must be attached for 36-48 hours or more before the Lyme disease bacterium can be transmitted.

How to remove a tick:

1. If a tick is attached to you, use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick at the surface of your skin.
2. Pull the tick straight up and out. Don't twist or jerk the tick—this can cause the mouth parts to break off and stay in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth parts with tweezers if you can. If not, leave them alone and let your skin heal.
3. Clean the bite and your hands with rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub, or soap and water.
4. You may get a small bump or redness that goes away in 1-2 days, like a mosquito bite. This is not a sign that you have Lyme disease.

Note: Do not put hot matches, nail polish, or petroleum jelly on the tick to try to make it pull away from your skin.



When to see your doctor:

See a doctor if you develop a fever, a rash, severe fatigue, facial paralysis, or joint pain within 30 days of being bitten by a tick. Be sure to tell your doctor about your tick bite. If you have these symptoms and work where Lyme disease is common, it is important to get treatment right away.

If you do not get treatment, you may later experience severe arthritis and problems with your nerves, spinal cord, brain, or heart.

Safety...one habit you NEVER need to break!!!

