

Take Protective Measures Against Tick-Carried Diseases When Doing Outdoor Activities



Tick carried diseases such as Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever and Lyme Disease have been reported *in LA*. These diseases are transmitted to humans by the bite of an infected tick.

Steps to prevention:

1. Avoid walking through dense woods and grasses. Stay on pathways and trails.
2. Wear proper clothing – a tucked in shirt with snug collar and cuffs; long, light-colored pants tucked into socks; and sturdy shoes. Tick repellents which include the ingredient DEET may be applied to clothing. Light colored clothing makes the tick easier to see and to remove while it is crawling.
3. Each person must monitor herself and her clothing. Inspect clothing and body after being outdoors. Remove any tick with tweezers while wearing protective gloves. If the tick is embedded, grasp the head close to the skin with tweezers and pull firmly until it lets go. Wash the site and hands with soap and water. Apply antiseptic to the bite. Note the date and reaction of the bite.
4. Watch for symptoms of tick-carried disease infections. Any of the symptoms listed below should be reported to a doctor. Prompt treatment is important.

SYMPTOMS INCLUDE:

Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever - is a serious infectious disease which can be transmitted to people through the bite of an infected tick. After an incubation period of 3 to 10 days, there is a sudden onset of fever, usually with chills, headache and muscle aches. Initially it may seem "flu-like". The onset is definite and the patient is so sick that a doctor is usually called. A rash usually appears 1 to 3 days after the onset of fever, most often on the wrists and ankles. Sometimes it resembles measles. Later the rash may spread over the entire body and may even be seen of the palms of the hands and soles of the feet. Prompt medical treatment is extremely important. Although recovery usually occurs with the proper treatment, the disease can be fatal, especially if treatment is delayed.

Lyme Disease - is a disease which can cause skin, joint, heart and nervous system problems. It may affect people of all ages, possibly continuing months or years if not adequately treated. Lyme Disease bacteria is transmitted by the bite of an infected tick or flea. Illness usually begins in the spring or summer and is typically divided into three different stages, often with apparent recovery between stages. The different stages may overlap but can occur independently. Stage 1: Flu-like symptoms occur with 3-28 days and many people have a skin lesion (red ring with lighter center) at bite site. Secondary rashes also often appear. Stage 2: Nervous system and Heart involvement with excruciating attacks of headaches and neck pain or stiffness. Stage 3: Joint and nervous system involvement with the development of arthritis joint pain.

For more information, please contact the **LA** health department or your personal physician.