



MEDIA REQUESTS:
Janenne Irene Pung, PIO
231-547-7653
Media@nwhealth.org
www.nwhealth.org

May 20, 2022

Health Department of Northwest Michigan

Seasonal tick awareness notice

Be watchful and take precautions during and after outdoor activities

As more people head outdoors, the risk of incidental human-tick interactions increases. In the summer, not only adult ticks, but tick larvae and nymphs are most active. Tick larvae and nymphs are difficult to spot because they are smaller than a sesame seed. More tick encounters may lead to tick-borne diseases such as Lyme Disease, Anaplasmosis, Ehrlichiosis, and Babesiosis.

“Northwest Michigan is a recreational wonderland. As our outdoor activities increase, so should our awareness of the possibility of ticks making their way onto ourselves and our pets,” said Dan Thorell, Health Department of Northwest Michigan Interim Health Officer. “The following measures are practical steps to remaining safe. It’s important to note that ticks must be attached for 36 to 48 hours to transmit Lyme disease.”

Take these steps to protect yourself against ticks and the diseases they may carry:

- Use repellent that contains 20% or more DEET, picaridin, or IR3535 on exposed skin for protection that lasts several hours.
- Wear clothing treated with permethrin.
- Look for ticks on your body, including on your scalp and behind your ears. If you find one, immediately remove it using tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin’s surface as possible and pull up.
- Put your clothes in the dryer on high heat for 60 minutes to kill any remaining ticks.
- Take a shower as soon as you can after coming indoors.

Questions regarding ticks and other vectors in Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties should be directed to the Health Department of Northwest Michigan’s Environmental Health Division at 800-432-4121. Health-related questions should be directed to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services at 800- 648-6942.

Additional information regarding ticks and Lyme disease can be found here:

- <https://www.michigan.gov/lyme>
- https://www.michigan.gov/mdhh/0,5885,7-339-71548_54783_54784_78428_78430_83603---_00.html
- <https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/index.html>
- https://www.michigan.gov/documents/emergingdiseases/Tick_Bite_Prevention_432367_7.pdf

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The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For more information, visit nwhealth.org.