

Lyme Disease

What is it?

Lyme disease is an illness caused by the bite of infected black-legged ticks and western black-legged ticks.

What does the disease look like? What do ticks look like?

Ticks are the carriers of Lyme disease. Ticks vary in size, from the size of a poppy seed to the size of a pea.



Image © 2014 Public Health Agency of Canada

How is it caused? Types of Ticks in the area

Ticks spread Lyme disease through bites. In Canada, the two species of ticks that spread Lyme disease are the blacklegged tick and the western blacklegged tick. The bites are small and generally painless. These bites typically do not spread the disease in the first 36-48 hours. Lyme disease is not contagious between humans but sometimes if pets are carrying an infected tick, they can spread Lyme disease.

Signs and Symptoms

Signs and symptoms of Lyme disease can vary between individuals. The cardinal sign of an infection is a bull's-eye rash, although not all people get the rash. Other common symptoms include: fatigue, fever, chills, headache, dizziness, spasms, weakness, muscle and joint pain, numbness, tingling, and swollen lymph nodes (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2014). There

can also be a delay between time of infection and symptoms appearing. The bull's-eye rash and flu-like symptoms typically occur within a month of infection. After several weeks or months, joint pain and neurological problems may appear.



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://phil.cdc.gov/phil/>

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How to remove it/treatment

If you have been bitten by a tick, you should see a trained individual, such as a trained counsellor or the camp nurse. Ticks may be removed carefully with tweezers by grasping it as closely to the skin as possible and slowly pulling upwards (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2014). When removing ticks, do not twist or crush the tick, and save it to show a healthcare provider. Remember to note the date and location of the bite. In case of infection, two to four weeks of antibiotics may be prescribed (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2014).

Prevention

A good rule of thumb is to cover-up exposed skin in wooded areas: wear close-toed shoes, long sleeves and pants, and pulling socks over pant legs. In addition, wearing light-coloured clothing will make ticks easier to see. Insect repellent containing DEET should be applied to skin and clothes. After being outdoors, remember to check yourself and others for ticks and/or tick bites daily.

Risks

Areas prone to ticks include heavily wooded areas.

What does Camp Kawartha do?

All counsellors and trip leaders are trained on tick recognition and removal using proper techniques. Head-to-toe checks are completed pre- and post- trip. In cases of infection, campers are taken to appropriate healthcare providers for treatment.

References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014, July 22). [*Lyme disease Rashes and Look-alikes*](#).

Mayo Clinic. (2012, October 3). [*Lyme disease*](#).

Public Health Agency of Canada. (2014, June 27). [*Lyme disease*](#).