

Northern Star Council Camps Lyme disease Awareness & Prevention for Campers

With proper planning and education, tick problems can be minimized

PLEASE SHARE WITH PARENTS OF PARTICIPANTS

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection that people may develop after being bitten by a Lyme-infected deer tick. Minnesota and Wisconsin are high-risk areas for Lyme disease; this is especially true for the wooded or forested regions of these two states. This handout provides campers with some prevention strategies for avoiding Lyme disease and discusses what Lyme disease may look like so campers will know to see a physician if these symptoms develop. **Please share this information with all parents, leaders and Scouts** in your unit who are planning to attend camp this summer or who have attended camp.

Remember prevention works: use it!

Prevention

- The best way to prevent Lyme disease is to keep from being bitten. Insecticides work by killing ticks, repellants work by encouraging them to leave before biting. **Permethrin** is the active ingredient of insecticides: it should be used on clothing, sleeping bags and tents, not applied to skin. It has passed EPA safety tests and is extensively used by the US military. Retail products are made by various manufactures and can be found at outdoor stores such as Gander Mountain and Fleet Farm. **DEET** is the chemical found in many repellents. To repel ticks the concentration needs to be 30% or higher. It is safe to apply to unbroken skin but it can damage certain fabrics and materials. All campers should wear a good quality insect repellant when they are in the woods. Pay special attention to spray the area below the knees.
- Please do not let Scouts use aerosol sprays unsupervised because of potential dangers from misuse including damage to eyes and the flammability of the product.
- Walk in the center of trails to avoid picking up ticks from brush and long grass.
- Wear long pants and light-colored clothing (easier to identify ticks on light colors).
- Make "tick checks" part of the daily routine at camp. Scouts should be reminded every day to check for ticks, while parents should help younger Cub Scouts with actual checks. Regular showers will also help with early detection. Please note that ticks tend to attached at points of constriction.

What to do upon returning home

- Check for any ticks that may have remained on the body after leaving camp.
- Check under clothes, ticks tend to attach at points of constriction.
- *Early signs and symptoms appear 3 to 32 days after at tick bite and may include fever, fatigue, headache, aching joints, nausea and sometimes a bulls eye type rash. If any of these symptoms appear, you should see a doctor.*
- Lyme disease can be a tricky diagnosis for physicians to make and lab testing is not always reliable. If you develop symptoms of Lyme disease make sure you see your physician and let him or her know you have participated in outdoor activities in areas know to have Lyme disease.
- If tested positive for Lyme disease or a tick related illness, you will be put on antibiotics and no symptoms should remain or reoccur.
- If a Scout comes home from camp and finds he has any type of tick related illness, please call 651-254-9153 and give the Scouts name, phone #, unit #, week at camp and the campsite name. This information can be left on a recorded message if necessary. This information will help the Camp Program Committee track the occurrences and help in future policy decisions.

Additional Information can be obtained at:

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/lyme>

Lyme Disease Awareness is Communicated through:

- Camp Leader Guides
- Camping Websites
- Posters at Camp
- Reminders during Camp Tours
- Document is given to Each Camper as they Exit Camp

Landscape Treatment

- Effort is made to mow campsites/program areas prior to the Summer Camping Season
- Permethrin use is encouraged for camp staff
- Fogging/treating an area with Permethrin is utilized in areas of dense tick populations