

INSECT TRANSMITTED INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND WOODLAND

Woodland consists of many large wooded areas, habitat for ticks carrying the bacterium of Lyme disease. While the late spring has decreased the mosquito population this occurrence has had no influence on the tick population, which is substantially increasing. The rate of tick infection is spreading from Ramsey into Hennepin County, which makes residents of Woodland vulnerable to inoculation through a tick bite (black legged or deer tick) to Lyme Disease.

Tick born Lyme disease

During the 15 year period (1996-2010) 10,821 confirmed cases were reported. The population of the deer tick or bear tick (*Ixodes scapularis*, the black legged tick) is increasing in Minnesota east of the Mississippi River and starting to invade Hennepin County in measurable quantities.

If the tick is infected with spirochet, *Borrelia burgdorferi*, and attached to the skin for 24-48 hours, inoculation with ensuing Lyme disease for humans and animals (including dogs) can result. Fortunately not all ticks are infected with the bacterium.

Signs and symptoms include: the "bull in eye" rash (a red ring with central clearing), fever, chills, muscle and joint pain, fatigue and headache. If a person has one or several of these signs or symptoms, 3 to 30 days after a tick bite or spending time in infested woodlands, medical attention should be sought. If left untreated, further development includes: facial paralysis, weakness and joint pain with arthritis (particularly the knees). Fortunately, antibiotic treatment (e.g. Doxycycline), if early in the course, can eradicate the bacteria with reversal of the signs and symptoms.

Bottom line for Lyme disease

Screen yourself, children and dogs after being out in the woods. The ticks are about ¼ inch in size and can be removed by gentle slow pulling with tweezers. Topical application of DEET (30-35%) or permethrin are repellants-partially deterrent. Permethrin when sprayed on fabrics (cloths) can be toxic to the ticks. Both chemicals, in application form, are available in many pharmacies and camping stores.

MOSQUITO BORN (TREE HOLD MOSQUITO) VIRAL LA CROSSE ENCEPHALITIS-LAC

Mosquito borne encephalitis is yet of a concern to residents of Woodland as we have reported in the past.

For more information and answers to questions with regard to Lyme Disease and Mosquito borne Encephalitis contact:

www.health.state.mn.us

www.mayoclinic.com

Mn Department of Health, Division of Infectious Disease (651)201-5414.

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