

INFORMATION

LYME DISEASE



FOR PARENTS AND SCHOOL STAFF

The warm weather is finally here, so families, schools and day camps are heading outdoors. Accordingly, the Direction de santé publique wishes to remind you that cases of Lyme disease are reported throughout the Montérégie region.

How is Lyme disease transmitted?

- The bacteria that causes Lyme disease is transmitted through the bite of an infected tick.
- While the risk of being bitten is higher between May and September, tick bites are possible as early as April and as late in the year as November.
- Ticks are found primarily in forest, wooded areas and tall grass.
- Adults and children doing activities in these areas are at greater risk to be exposed to ticks. Hiking, cycling, camping and gardening near these areas are examples of at-risk activities.

How to protect yourself from ticks

Here are a variety of ways to protect yourself as well as your kids from tick bites, while benefiting the most of being outdoors in higher risk areas:

- Wear long, light-coloured clothing. Ticks are more visible against light colours. Tuck your shirt into your pants and your pants into your socks. Wear a hat and closed shoes. If possible, change your clothes when you get back from the activity.
- Apply a DEET- or icaridin-based insect repellent, according to the instructions on the product label.
- Stay on maintained trails.
- In order to reduce the presence of ticks around your residence: mow the lawn regularly and pick up leaves and debris. If you live near a wooded area, separate it from your yard with a band of mulch or gravel.

What to do after an outdoor activity in a high-risk area for ticks?

- Take a shower or bath as soon as you get home.
- Inspect your skin and that of your kids for ticks; if you find any, remove them as quickly as possible. The risk of contracting the disease is very low if the tick is removed within 24 hours.
- Inspect yourself as well as your kids daily if you live in a high-risk area for ticks.

What to do if you find a tick attached to your skin?

- Remove it as quickly as possible.
- Call Info-Santé at 811; the nurse may recommend that you consult a doctor or a pharmacist in order to evaluate the possibility to take antibiotics as a preventive measure.

What are the symptoms of Lyme disease and what to do if they appear?

- A skin redness around the bite measuring at least 5 cm or fever, headache and fatigue, within 30 days of a tick bite or an outdoor activity in a high-risk zone. Other health problems could also develop over the following year.
- Consult a doctor if you develop symptoms of Lyme disease. Antibiotics are effective at treating the disease.

EN SAVOIR PLUS

You can also consult the information page on the
Direction de santé publique de la Montérégie's website at
www.santemonteregie.qc.ca/en/health-advice/lyme-disease.

This page informs the population regarding:

- areas at higher risk of exposure to ticks using an interactive map of the Montérégie region;
- how to protect themselves;
- what to do if they are bitten by a tick;
- symptoms of Lyme disease.

Photos and videos are also available.

Enjoy your summer!

Direction de santé publique de la Montérégie

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