

Prevention Tip of the Month:
Prevent Insect Related Disease

Lyme Disease-

Lyme disease is caused by the bite of infected deer ticks. Reducing exposure to ticks is the best defense against Lyme disease.

- Protect yourself from tick bites. Avoid wooded and brushy areas with high grass and a lot of leaf litter.
- Take extra precautions in May, June and July when ticks are most active.
- Use insect repellent with 20%-30% DEET and follow manufacturer's recommendations. Insect repellents containing DEET should not be used on children under 2 months of age. When applying repellents to children, avoid applying them to children's hands, around their eyes, or to any areas where there are cuts or irritated skin. Do not use insect repellent on infants; use mosquito netting instead.
- Wear long pants, long sleeves, and long socks to keep ticks off your skin. Light colored clothing will help you spot ticks more easily. Tucking pant legs into socks or boots and tucking shirts into pants help keep ticks on the outside of clothing.
- Perform daily tick checks on yourself, your children and your pets after being outdoors. If a tick is found, do not apply mineral oil, petroleum jelly, nail polish or heat. Use fine-tipped tweezers to firmly grasp the tick very close to the skin. With a steady motion, pull the tick body away from the skin.
- If you remove a tick(s), the Livingston County Department of Health, Center for Environmental Health, can send the tick for identification. If it is a deer tick, that increases concern for possible exposure to Lyme disease. If symptoms, such as a rash at the site of the tick bite, fatigue, fever, headache, muscle and joint aches or swollen lymph nodes appear after several days, consult your health care provider.



West Nile Virus-

West Nile Virus (WNV) is carried by infected mosquitoes and can be passed on to humans through mosquito bites. WNV can be life threatening. The best protection is to be prepared and follow tips to prevent mosquito bites:

- Wear long sleeves, pants and socks and use mosquito repellents when outdoors, especially during dawn or dusk when mosquitoes are most active. Repellents containing DEET work best: just make sure to follow the directions on the label. Insect repellents containing DEET should **NOT** be used on children under 2 months of age; use mosquito netting around infants. When applying repellents to children, avoid applying to the children's hands, around the eyes, or to any areas where there are cuts or irritated skin.
- Mosquito proof areas around your home by eliminating places where water can stand and mosquitoes may lay eggs. Empty flowerpot saucers and turn over buckets. If you have a bird bath clean it at least once a week.
- Check window and door screens for holes where mosquitoes might get inside. Repair as needed.



For questions please contact the Center for Environmental Health at 243-7280 or 335-1717.

