



Protection from Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is an emerging disease in Canada that is caused by the bite of an infected blacklegged tick. These small ticks are found in Canada, including on the island portion of Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as in the United States and internationally. The preferred habitat for these ticks is tall grass, brush, and forested areas.

Currently there are no areas in Newfoundland and Labrador that are believed to have permanent populations of blacklegged ticks. However, blacklegged ticks, including some infected with Lyme disease, are found each year around the province. These ticks likely arrive on migratory birds. While the risk of Lyme disease in Newfoundland and Labrador is considered low, residents are encouraged to take preventive measures to protect themselves from tick bites.

Those who are most at risk for exposure to ticks and Lyme disease include:

- Travelers to known Lyme disease risk areas
- Outdoor enthusiasts (e.g. campers, hikers, hunters, fishers)
- Persons with outdoor occupations
- Families living or playing in areas with suitable habitat for blacklegged ticks
- Pets

To protect yourself from tick and insect bites:

- Use an insect repellent such as DEET or Icaridin (always read product label directions before applying);
- Cover as much of your skin as possible, tuck pants legs into boots or socks;
- Wear light-colored clothing to be able to spot ticks on your clothes more easily;
- Walk on well-travelled trails wherever possible to avoid grass, brush, or shrubs; and
- Check yourself, your family and pets after being in an area where ticks may be present.

Websites for more information on Lyme disease:

How to remove a tick: <http://www.faa.gov.nl.ca/agrifoods/animals/health/ticks/removeticks.html>

Lyme disease in humans:

http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/infectioncontrol/lyme_disease.pdf

Ticks and Lyme disease in NL, please visit:

<http://www.faa.gov.nl.ca/agrifoods/animals/health/lymedisease.html>

Websites for healthcare professionals:

Please see the Provincial Disease Control Manual for more information about Lyme disease:

http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publications/diseasecontrol/s6_vectorborne_and_other_zoonotic_diseases.pdf

Public Health Laboratory website <http://publichealthlab.ca/service/lyme-disease-borrelia-burgdorferi/>