

MICHIGANDERS URGED TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS TO PREVENT TICK BITES

Manistee County listed among the highest for tick-borne disease in state in 2021

May 25, 2022 – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and District Health Department #10 (DHD#10) are urging residents to take precautions to avoid tick bites while outdoors as cases of two tick-borne diseases, Lyme disease and anaplasmosis, significantly increased in 2021.

According to MDHHS, cases of Lyme disease in Michigan jumped from 451 in 2020 to 878 in 2021. Lyme disease is the most common tick-borne disease. Anaplasmosis, the second most common tick-borne disease, also increased from 17 confirmed cases in 2020 to 56 in 2021. Counties with the largest increase in anaplasmosis cases include Dickinson and Menominee in the Upper Peninsula and Manistee and Benzie in the Lower Peninsula. Health care providers need to consider tick-borne diseases in people presenting with fever and other non-specific symptoms during the warm months when ticks are active.

“If you see a tick attached, remove it right away,” said DHD#10 Medical Director Dr. Jennifer Morse. “Even if you feel okay after removing the tick, it is a good idea to keep an eye out for any fever, rashes, or joint aches. If you have any of these, contact your healthcare provider.”

Help protect yourself and your loved ones from tick-borne diseases by doing the following:

- **Avoid tick-infested areas**
 - Because ticks live in grassy, brushy wooded areas, walk in the center of trails to avoid contact with overgrown grass, brush, and leaf litter at trail edges.
 - Dogs and cats can encounter ticks outdoors and bring them into the home. Talk with your veterinarian about the best tick prevention products for your pet.
- **Use insect repellent**
 - Apply repellent containing DEET or Picaridin on exposed skin.
 - Treat clothes (especially pants, socks, and shoes) with permethrin, which kills ticks on contact or buy clothes that are pre-treated. Do not use permethrin directly on skin.
 - Always follow the manufacturer’s instructions when applying repellents.
- **Perform daily tick checks**
 - Always check for ticks on yourself and your animals after being outdoors, even in your own yard.
 - Inspect all body surfaces carefully and remove attached ticks with tweezers.
 - To remove a tick, grasp the tick firmly and as closely to the skin as possible. With a steady motion, pull the tick’s body away from the skin. Cleanse the area with an antiseptic.



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- **Bathe or shower**

- Bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors (within two hours) to wash off and more easily find ticks that are crawling on you.
- Wash clothing in hot water and dry on high heat to help kill ticks in clothing.

MDHHS can help you identify ticks you might encounter outdoors by emailing photos to MDHHS-bugs@michigan.gov. For more information on how to submit your tick and/or photos, visit <https://www.michigan.gov/Lyme>.

To find more information on ticks, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/Ticks>.

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