



MEDIA CONTACT:
Laurel Johnson, PIO
O: 231-347-5628
l.johnson@nwhealth.org
www.nwhealth.org

April 19, 2020

SPRING SEASONAL TICK AWARENESS NOTICE

Due to Governor Gretchen Whitmer's "Stay Home, Stay Safe" Executive Order (EO 2020-42), the Health Department of Northwest Michigan is issuing an early tick awareness notice. Under Executive Order 2020-42, residents are allowed to engage in outdoor activities like walking, hiking, running, and cycling while continuing to follow physical distancing measures. As more residents head outside during the order, the risk of human-tick interactions also increases.

"In the next few weeks, we tend to see a sharp increase in tick activity," said Scott Kendzierski, Environmental Health Director for the Health Department of Northwest Michigan. "It is very important when engaging in outdoor recreation that you wear protective clothing and conduct thorough tick checks when coming inside, including your pets. The nymph stage of the blacklegged tick is very small and may not be noticed in a casual detection."

We want to remind residents that being outside and getting fresh air and sunshine are beneficial for overall health, but those who enjoy nature and the outdoors should take standard seasonal precautions like:

- Using repellent that contains 20 percent or more DEET, picaridin, or IR3535 on exposed skin for protection that lasts several hours.
- Wearing clothing that has been treated with permethrin.
- Looking for ticks on your body and on any pet(s) after spending time outside.
- Putting your clothes in the dryer on high heat for 60 minutes to kill any remaining ticks.
- Taking a shower as soon as you can after coming indoors.

Questions regarding ticks in Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties should be directed to the Health Department of Northwest Michigan Environmental Health Division at 231-547-6523. Health related questions should be directed to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services at 1-800-648-6942. Additional information regarding ticks and Lyme disease can be found at the [State of Michigan website](http://www.state.michigan.gov) and the [Center for Disease Control and Prevention website](http://www.cdc.gov).

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For more information, visit nwhealth.org.

###