SUMMER SAFETY GUIDE

CLINTON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

SUMMER 2017

WHAT'S INSIDE...

2 WHAT'S BITING YOU?
3 MOSQUITOES
4-5 TICKS AND LYME DISEASE
6 PROTECT YOURSELF
7 PROTECT YOUR HOME
8-9 ANIMALS AND RABIES
10 BED BUGS
11-12 SUN AND WATER SAFETY

CCHD
Clinton County HEALTH Department www.ClintonHealth.org
WHAT'S BITING YOU?

PREVENTION IS YOUR BEST DEFENSE

SUMMER HAS ARRIVED! THAT MEANS SUN AND FUN, BUT IT IS ALSO THE TIME OF YEAR WHEN PEOPLE ARE MOST LIKELY TO COME IN CONTACT WITH TICKS, MOSQUITOES AND ANIMALS THAT CAN TRANSMIT DISEASE.

LEARN MORE ABOUT WHAT'S BITING YOU AND HOW TO STAY SAFE THIS SUMMER.

Mosquitoes
West Nile virus (WNV) and Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) are the most common diseases transmitted by local mosquitoes. There are no human vaccines for these diseases, but there are simple steps you can take to protect yourself, your family, and your community from mosquitoes.

Ticks
Lyme disease is the most common disease spread by ticks in our region, but there are other serious diseases that ticks can also spread. Preventing tick bites is your best defense.

Animals
Wildlife is part of the beauty of our Adirondack region, but animals are best viewed from afar. Rabies is a deadly disease caused by a virus that attacks the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord). Infected mammals can transmit the rabies virus to humans and other mammals. Rabies is most often seen among wild animals such as raccoons, bats, skunks and foxes, but any mammal can be infected with rabies. Getting your cats, dogs, ferrets and livestock vaccinated is an important step in the protection against rabies!
MOSQUITOES
MORE THAN AN ITCH

WNV and EEE are both diseases caused by viruses than can be spread through the bite of an infected mosquito. Most people infected with WNV or EEE will have no symptoms or only mild symptoms, but some people will face severe illness. No specific treatment or medicine exists for WNV or EEE infections. Those with severe illness may be hospitalized and receive IV fluids and respiratory support. Milder WNV illness improves on its own, although illness may last weeks to months.

WNV
Symptoms may appear 3-14 days after a bite occurs. Mild symptoms: fever, headache, body aches, nausea, vomiting, and sometimes swollen lymph glands or a rash on the chest, stomach and back. Severe symptoms: high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness and paralysis. If you develop any symptoms of severe WNV illness, seek medical attention immediately. About one in every 150 people infected with WNV will develop severe illness. Most people recover completely from even severe WNV disease.

EEE
Symptoms may appear 4-10 days after the bite of an infected mosquito. Most people with EEE infections do not experience any noticeable illness. Severe cases begin with headache, high fever, chills and vomiting. The illness may progress into disorientation, seizures or coma. About one out of every three people who develop symptoms of EEE will die of the illness, and of those who survive, many have lifelong mild to severe brain damage.

Zika Virus
The Zika virus is known to cause serious birth defects in infants. It is primarily transmitted to humans by the Aedes species of mosquitoes. While the Aedes aegypti mosquito is not found in New York State, its close relative, the Aedes albopictus, is. The Clinton County Health Department is monitoring for Aedes albopictus mosquitoes in our region. However, the biggest local threat from Zika virus exists for those traveling to areas where the virus is present. Sexual partners of men who travel to areas where Zika virus is present are also at risk. Pregnant women should not travel to areas with Zika. See the CDC’s Travel Health Notices: http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information. If you have a male sex partner who lives in or travels to an area with Zika, you should use condoms the right way every time you have sex, or do not have sex during pregnancy.

There have been increased reports of Guillain-Barré syndrome, an uncommon sickness of the nervous system, linked to Zika. For most people infection with Zika virus is usually mild. Many people show no symptoms at all. The most common symptoms are fever, rash, joint pain, or red eyes. Other symptoms may include muscle pain and headache. Symptoms can last for several days to a week. People usually don’t get sick enough to go to the hospital and they very rarely die from Zika.
TICKS & LYME DISEASE

Deer (black-legged) ticks carry the bacterium that causes Lyme disease and are more commonly found in shady, moist areas at ground level. They will cling to tall grass, brush and shrubs, usually no more than 18-24 inches off the ground. They also live in lawns and gardens, especially at the edges of woods and around old stone walls.

Spotting a Tick
Young deer ticks, called nymphs, are brown and the size of poppy seeds. Adult female deer ticks are red and black, while males are black. Adult deer ticks are about the size of a sesame seed. Deer ticks cant jump or fly, and dont drop onto passing people or animals. They get on humans and animals only by direct contact. Once a tick gets on the skin, it generally climbs upward until it reaches a hiding area, such as the armpit or groin. If you garden, hike, camp, hunt, work, or otherwise spend time in the outdoors, there are easy steps you can take to protect yourself against Lyme disease.

I found a tick. What should I do?

- Don’t panic.
- Not all ticks are infected, and your risk of Lyme disease is greatly reduced if the tick is removed within the first 24-36 hours.
- Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick at the surface of your skin.
- Pull the tick straight up and out. Don’t twist or jerk the tick—this can cause the mouth parts to break off and stay in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth parts with tweezers if you can. If not, leave them alone and let your skin heal.
- Clean the bite and your hands with rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub, or soap and water. You may get a small bump or redness that goes away in 1-2 days, like a mosquito bite. This is not a sign that you have Lyme disease.

OTHER ILLNESSES SPREAD BY TICKS

Infected ticks can also spread Rocky Mountain spotted fever, Babesiosis, Anaplasmosis and Powassan Encephalitis. While these are far less common, they are also a concern. The Powassan virus has been in the local headlines lately due to a rise in the number of cases in our region. On average, there are 2-3 cases of Powassan Virus each year in New York State. In 2017, three cases have already been identified in nearby Saratoga County. Similar to WNV or EEE, symptoms of Powassan (POW) virus infection can be mild or severe. Health care providers in NY State have been advised to be on the lookout for possible cases. Powassan can be passed more quickly from tick to human. Therefore, it is important to look for ticks often when outdoors and remove them as soon as possible.

Note: Do not put hot matches, nail polish, or petroleum jelly on the tick to try to make it pull away from your skin. Special tick removal instruments can also be purchased. Always follow the manufacturer’s instructions when using a tick removal device.
A LITTLE ON LYME DISEASE

The disease we most commonly associate with ticks is Lyme Disease. Lyme disease is an illness caused by bacteria and spread by the bite of an infected deer tick to people or animals. Infected ticks can also spread Rocky Mountain spotted fever, Babesiosis, Anaplasmosis and Powassan Encephalitis.

Untreated, Lyme disease can result in lasting health problems. Patients treated with antibiotics in the early stage of the infection usually recover quickly and completely. The early symptoms of Lyme disease may be mild and easily missed.

Call your doctor if you develop a fever, rash, severe fatigue, facial paralysis, or joint pain within 30 days of a tick bite. If a rash occurs, it is usually at the site of the tick bite and is a “bulls-eye” circular patch or solid red patch that grows larger. The rash typically isn’t painful or itchy, and may or may not be warm to the touch.

Without treatment, you may develop severe arthritis and problems with your nerves, spinal cord, brain or heart. Lyme disease treatment generally involves taking antibiotics for two to three weeks. Allow yourself plenty of rest, as you may feel tired while you are recovering, even though the infection is cured. Some people wonder if there is a test to confirm that they are cured. Unfortunately, your body remembers an infection long after it has cleared, so additional blood tests might be positive for months or years. This doesn’t mean you are still infected.

Photo Credit: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Only 60-80% of people with Lyme disease will have the typical bulls-eye rash where the bite was. This usually occurs within 3-30 days of the bite.

MAIN POINTS, PLEASE

- Lyme disease is an illness spread by ticks.
- Not all ticks have Lyme disease.
- Use fine-tip tweezers to remove a tick; pull up and out and clean the bite area.
- Call your doctor if you get a rash around the bite or if you have a fever, are very tired, or have joint pain within 30 days of a tick bite.
PROTECT YOURSELF FROM MOSQUITOES & TICKS

- Use only an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellent that contains 20-30% DEET, picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus. (See Using Insect Repellents Safely for more information.)
- Cover your skin as completely as possible. Wear enclosed shoes, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Tuck pant legs into socks or boots and shirt into pants.
- Mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing. Treat clothing and gear (such as boots, pants, socks, and tents) with permethrin or purchase permethrin-treated clothing and gear. Treated clothing remains protective after multiple washings. See product information to find out how long the protection will last. If treating items yourself, follow the product instructions carefully. Do NOT use permethrin products, intended to treat clothing, directly on skin.
- Wear light-colored clothing with a tight weave to spot ticks easily.
- Cover baby carriers with mosquito netting when outside.
- Look for ticks on your body after being outdoors. Ticks can hide under the armpits, behind the knees, in the hair, and in the groin.
- Take a shower as soon as you can after coming indoors.
- Put your clothes in the dryer on high heat for at least 10 minutes and up to 60 minutes to kill any remaining ticks. The clothes should be warm and completely dry. If clothing is washed first, use hot water.

MAIN POINTS, PLEASE

- Use insect repellent.
- EPA approved repellents are safe to use, even for pregnant and breastfeeding women.
- Reduce time spent in tall grass and shrubs.
- Wear light-colored, long sleeved shirts, long pants, socks and high boots when outdoors.
- Tuck shirts into pants and pants into socks to cover your whole body.
- Check your entire body for ticks after being outdoors.
- Shower as soon as you can after coming indoors.
- Get rid of standing water around your yard and home.
- Keep lawns mowed; clear brush and leaf litter.

USING INSECT REPELLENTS SAFELY

EPA-registered insect repellents are proven safe and effective, even for pregnant and breastfeeding women. Here are some additional tips for safe use.
- Always follow the product label instructions.
- Reapply insect repellent as directed, usually every few hours depending on which product and strength you choose.
- Do not spray repellent on the skin under clothing.
- If you are using sunscreen, apply sunscreen first and insect repellent second.
- The effectiveness of non-EPA-registered insect repellents, including some natural repellents, is not known.
- Store out of the reach of children. Do not allow children to apply repellents themselves.
- When applying repellents to children, apply to your own hands and then put it on the child. Avoid the child’s hands, as repellent may then end up in their eyes or mouth.
Reducing Mosquitoes And Ticks Around Your Home

Here are some things you can do to reduce the number of MOSQUITOES around your home and yard.

- Install or repair screens on windows and doors. Use air conditioning when available.
- Get rid of standing water in and around your home. Empty and scrub, turn over, cover, or throw out items that hold water, such as tires, buckets, planters, toys, pools, birdbaths, flowerpots, or trash containers.
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers that are kept outdoors.
- Make sure roof gutters drain properly, and clean clogged gutters in the spring and fall.
- Tightly cover water storage containers (buckets, cisterns, rain barrels). For containers without lids, use wire mesh with holes smaller than an adult mosquito.
- If you have a septic tank, repair cracks or gaps. Cover open vent or plumbing pipes. Use wire mesh with holes smaller than an adult mosquito.

Mosquito Dunks
Mosquito rings, often referred to by the tradename Dunks, kill mosquito larvae (newly hatched, baby mosquitoes) in standing water. They release a type of bacteria which kills the larvae when they feed. These rings (or pouches) can be used in birdbaths, rain barrels, swamps, trash containers, or any place where water collects and is not routinely emptied. They should not be used for drinking water but are safe for animals and for use in organic gardening. As a precaution, keep out of children’s reach and always follow safety precautions on product packaging.

Here are some things you can do to reduce the number of TICKS around your home and yard.

- Keep lawns mowed and edges trimmed.
- Keep the ground under bird feeders clean so as not to attract small animals that can carry ticks into your yard.
- Clear brush, leaf litter and tall grass around the house, and at the edges of gardens and stone walls.
- Stack woodpiles neatly away from the house and preferably off the ground.
- In the fall, clear all leaf and garden litter, where ticks can live in the winter, out of your yard.
- Locate children’s swing sets and other play equipment in sunny, dry areas of the yard, away from the woods where ticks can be abundant.
Animals and the Rabies Virus

People are usually exposed to the rabies virus when an infected animal bites them, or when saliva from a rabid animal enters an open cut or mucous membrane (eyes, nose or mouth). Rabies is almost always fatal once symptoms appear. It is important to take action if you are bitten by a wild animal or pet. Wash wounds right away with soap and running water. Call your family doctor or go to the emergency room.

Signs of rabies virus in animals:
- A change in an animal's behavior is usually the first sign. It may act unusually aggressive or tame. A wild animal may be affectionate and friendly, losing its fear of people and natural enemies. It may also become excited or irritable and attack anything in its path.
- Staggering, convulsions, choking, frothing at the mouth and paralysis are sometimes seen.
- Many animals will make very unusual sounds.

Keep Your Home and Yard Free of Wild Animals

Feed your pets indoors and keep your property free of stored bird seed or other foods that may attract wild animals. Tightly cap or put away garbage cans and board up any openings in your basement, porch, or garage. If your home has a chimney, make sure it is capped with a screen.

If a wild animal is living in a garage, shed or other part of your home, contact a wild animal control expert to have them removed. You can find wildlife control experts who work on a fee-for-service basis in your telephone directory under pest control.

If your pet has been injured by a wild animal, contact your veterinarian to get medical care. Even if your pet has been vaccinated, a booster dose of rabies vaccine may be needed.

Report all animal bites to your local health department, even if they seem minor. In Clinton County, call the Health Department’s Environmental Health and Safety Division at 518-565-4870. If possible, keep track of the animal that bit you so it can be captured safely.

Protect Yourself From Rabies

- Don't feed, touch or adopt wild animals, stray dogs or cats.
- Vaccinate your pet dogs, cats and ferrets, as well as horses and livestock animals. Pets too young to be vaccinated should be kept indoors and allowed outside only under direct observation.
- Keep family pets indoors at night. Don't leave them outside unattended or let them roam free.
- Teach children not to touch any animal they do not know and to tell an adult immediately if they are bitten.
- If a wild animal is on your property, let it wander away. Bring children and pets indoors and alert neighbors.
- Report all animal bites or contact with wild animals that are acting unusual to your local health department. Try not to let any animal escape that has possibly exposed someone to rabies.
A Bit More on Rabies...

Vaccinated dogs, cats, ferrets and livestock that have bitten or caused a potential human exposure to rabies will be confined and observed for 10 days. If the animal stays healthy during this time then the animal did not transmit rabies at the time of the bite.

Other animals that cause a potential human exposure must be tested for rabies. If an animal cannot be observed or tested for rabies, treatment may be necessary for the people exposed.

Treatment after rabies exposure consists of one dose of immune globulin plus four doses of rabies vaccine given over two weeks. Treatment should start as soon as possible after the exposure.

A person who has already been vaccinated for rabies and is exposed to rabies must get two booster vaccine doses.

Exposure to a rabid animal does not always result in rabies. If treatment is started promptly, rabies can be prevented. If a rabies exposure is not treated and a person develops symptoms, the disease almost always results in death.

M A I N  P O I N T S ,  P L E A S E

- Animals making unusual sounds or movements may be infected with deadly germs.
- Report all animal bites to your local health department.
- Contact an animal control expert if a wild animal is living near your home.
- Teach children to not touch animals they do not know.
- Call your doctor or go to the emergency room if you are bitten by an animal.
- If you find a bat in your home, call your local health department.

Bats!

A person can be bitten by a bat and not know it, especially if a bat is found in a room where the person was sleeping. In most cases, bats found indoors should be captured and sent for testing. Close windows and closet doors to keep it in the room. In Clinton County, call the Health Department at 518-565-4870 for instructions.

RABIES CLINICS
For DOGS, CATS and FERRETS

Get your pets vaccinated today!
Visit www.clintonhealth.org/rabiesclinics for a list of free rabies clinics offered by the Clinton County Health Department.

To capture a bat:

- Wear gloves.
- When the bat has landed on a flat surface, place a coffee can over the bat.
- Slide a piece of cardboard under the container to trap the bat inside.
- Tape the cardboard to the container.
- Call your local health department for further instruction. (In Clinton County, the number is 518-565-4870.)
Other Bugs to Know: Bed Bugs

Bed bugs (Cimex lectularius) are found any time of year. They are small, flat parasitic insects that feed solely on the blood of people and animals while they sleep. While bed bugs are definitely a pest, often causing itchy bite marks, they are not known to transmit or spread disease. The recent increase in bed bugs in the United States is believed to be due to more travel, lack of knowledge about preventing infestations, increased resistance of bed bugs to pesticides, and ineffective pest control practices. Bed bugs are experts at hiding and are great hitchhikers, often moving from an infested site to a new home by traveling on furniture, bedding, luggage, boxes and clothing. Although bed bugs typically feed on blood every 5-10 days, they can be very resilient and survive several months to a year without feeding. Protect yourself and your home today!

Signs of Bed Bugs

Adult bed bugs are about the size of an apple seed with a long, brown, flat, oval-shaped body. If they have eaten recently they can appear more elongated, with a reddish-brown, balloon-like body. Young bed bugs (also called nymphs) are often almost invisible to the naked eye because of their smaller size and translucent or whitish-yellow color.

When not feeding, bed bugs hide in a variety of places. Around the bed, they can be found near the piping, seams and tags of the mattress and box spring, and in cracks on the bed frame and headboard. When cleaning, changing bedding, or staying away from home, look for:

- Rusty or reddish stains on bed sheets or mattresses caused by bed bugs being crushed.
- Dark spots (about the size of a pinpoint), which are bed bug excrement and may bleed on the fabric like a marker would.
- Eggs and eggshells, which are tiny (about 1 mm) and pale yellow skins that nymphs shed as they grow larger.

It can be hard to tell if you’ve been bitten by a bed bug unless you find bed bugs or signs of infestation. Most people do not realize they have been bitten until bite marks appear anywhere from one to several days after the initial bite. The bite marks are similar to that of a mosquito or flea—a slightly swollen and red area that may itch and be irritating. The bite marks may be random or appear in a straight line.

An adult bed bug is about the size of an apple seed.

Main Points, Please

- Bed bugs can be found any time of year. They are small, the size of an apple seed.
- Remove clutter in your home to reduce hiding spots for bed bugs.
- Vacuum frequently.
- Bites are similar to a mosquito bite.
- Check for bed bugs when traveling to avoid bites and prevent bringing them home.
Sun and Water Safety

Longer days and summer sun are welcome guests in Clinton County, but with them comes a greater risk for sunburns and heat-related illnesses. The sun’s rays can damage your skin in as little as 15 minutes and can cause skin cancer over time. To ensure a safe and healthy summer for you and your family, recall that the best defense is prevention.

Sunburn Prevention

- People of all skin types should apply sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or greater and that protects against both types of sun radiation (look for “UVA and UVB protection” or “broad spectrum” on the bottle’s label).
- Apply 15 to 30 minutes before sun exposure and reapply every two hours or after swimming, sweating or toweling off.
- Take a peek at the expiration date listed on sunscreen bottles. Sunscreens become less effective over time, potentially reducing their SPF rating. For sunscreen that does not have an expiration date, a typical recommendation is to throw it away after three years. Note that leaving your sunscreen in hot temperatures, like cars, may also reduce its efficacy more quickly.
- Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes from UV rays which can cause cataracts later in life. Look for an indication on the glasses reading “100% UV ray protection.”
- Wear hats, long sleeve shirts and other cover-ups as additional protection from the sun.

Water Smarts

Local lakes, pools, and swimming holes offer our residents opportunities for physical activity and to cool off from the heat of the summer months. However, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), drowning is the leading cause of injury death for young children ages 1 to 4. To keep the focus on fun and fitness, here are some tips to stay safe while swimming.

- Be attentive – drowning occurs quickly and quietly. Supervise children carefully in or near water, even when there is a lifeguard present. Encourage the use of the “buddy system,” especially for older children and adults.
- Enroll your child in formal swimming lessons to reduce the risk of drowning.
- Do not use toys, like water wings or foam noodles, in the place of life jackets – these are not designed to keep swimmers safe.
- Secure your at-home pool with appropriate barriers, including a fence with a self-latching gate. Place a safety cover on the pool and remove any ladders or steps used for access. Store pool toys out of sight when not in use, as these may attract younger children.
- Consider learning CPR.
Water Illnesses

In addition to swimming accidents, recreational water illnesses (RWIs) may lurk behind the fun that public pools and beaches provide. RWIs are spread by swallowing, breathing in mists of, or having contact with contaminated water and usually result in gastrointestinal illness. While chemicals like chlorine are effective in disinfecting against most of RWI-causing contaminants, there are some general rules that can help avoid the spread of water-related illnesses.

To reduce your risk of RWIs:
- Do not swallow water in the pool, hot tub, or lake.
- Shower before swimming to protect others from germs you may be carrying.
- Ensure your children take bathroom breaks while swimming.
- Stay out of the water if you or your children have diarrhea.

Main Points, Please
- Use a broad spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or greater.
- Apply sunscreen 15-30 minutes before going outside and reapply after swimming and sweating.
- Wear sunglasses with UV protection.
- Use hats and other cover-ups to further protect your skin.
- Do not swallow water in pools or lakes and avoid swimming when you are ill.

The Clinton County Health Department wants you and your family to enjoy a safe and healthy summer.
If you need any additional information, please visit our website or call 518-565-4840.