



Florence County Health Department

501 Lake Ave PO Box 410 Florence, Wisconsin 54121 715-528-4837
A.Seibold, RN, MS Health Officer/Director



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 1, 2020

Contact: Florence County Health Department
715-528-4837

KEEP YOUR SUMMER FREE FROM TICK BITES

Take steps to prevent getting sick from ticks

Florence – As it gets warmer this month and the snow begins to melt, the Florence County Health Department is reminding residents to protect themselves against ticks. Ticks are common in Wisconsin, and can spread diseases such as Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, babesiosis, and more rarely Powassan virus and Rocky Mountain spotted fever.

“With warmer weather, people start spending more and more time outside,” said Annette Seibold, Health Officer. “Residents can protect themselves and their families from tick bites by following simple steps before, during, and after being outdoors.”

Lyme disease is the most common illness spread by ticks in Wisconsin. It has spread to every county in the state over the last three decades, and doctors diagnose it in thousands of Wisconsinites each year. In 2018, over 3,105 cases of Lyme disease were reported in Wisconsin, and it’s estimated that many more cases were unreported. Florence County has seen a significant increase in reported cases of Lyme disease with 6 confirmed cases in 2018.

Many people who get sick from an illness spread by ticks do not remember getting a tick bite. The common symptoms of illnesses spread by ticks include fever, rash, headache, body aches, and fatigue. Most diseases spread by ticks in Wisconsin, including Lyme disease, can be treated with antibiotics. Call your doctor if you have worrisome symptoms and think you may have been bitten by a tick.

Tick bites are preventable. When spending time outdoors, follow these simple steps to protect yourself and your family members from tick bites:

BEFORE GOING OUTDOORS

- Use an insect repellent with at least 20% DEET or another [EPA-registered repellent](#) according to the label instructions.
- Use 0.5% permethrin products on clothing, socks, and shoes according to label instructions.
- Wear long sleeves and pants, and tuck pants into socks and shirts into pants to avoid ticks crawling under clothing.

Connecting you to a **Better Life!**

- Use a veterinarian-prescribed tick prevention treatment on pets.

WHILE OUTDOORS

- Walk in the center of trails and do not brush up against plants on the edge of trails.
- Avoid wooded and brushy areas with tall grass and leaves.

AFTER BEING OUTDOORS

- Check your entire body for ticks. Have someone check areas that you cannot see.
- Take a shower as soon as possible after coming in from outdoors.
- Place clothes in the dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill any ticks on clothing.

When spending time outdoors, be prepared and take a tick bite kit with you as a way to prevent Lyme disease. A tick bite kit contains alcohol swabs, bandages, insect repellent wipes that contain DEET (i.e. OFF! Deep Woods), tweezers, mini plastic bag (to keep tick after removed for identification), and a small plastic pouch to store supplies and for easy carrying and access. The Florence County Health Department will have **FIGHT THE BITE TICK REMOVAL KITS** available in the county for \$1.00 at select locations. Call the Florence County Health Department at 715-528-4837 for more information or visit our website at www.florencecountywi.com. The Health Department is located in the historic courthouse, at 501 Lake Avenue, on the first floor. Office hours are from 8:30am-4:00pm, Monday – Friday, closed for lunch from 12-12:30pm. More information on tick bite prevention can also be found by visiting the [Wisconsin Department of Health Services website](#).

###