

News Release 5/30/13

Columbiana County Health Department warns of increase presence of ticks

Lisbon-The Columbiana County Health Department reported today the increasing presence of ticks in the area and warns residents to take precaution as these species can carry disease.

The American dog tick is the most common variety of the insect found in the county, although black-legged, or deer, ticks have become increasingly common here and are the most dangerous, both to humans and the animals they keep. The Lone Star tick is mostly found in southern states but have localized due to birds migrating north.

The American dog tick can transmit Rocky Mountain spotted fever, while the Lone Star tick may carry ehrlichiosis. The black-legged tick, or deer tick are the most worrisome, as they are carriers of Lyme Disease, a non-fatal condition that can lead to neurological disorders if left untreated. The state health department recorded 67 cases of Lyme disease last year, up from 50 in 2011 and 43 in 2010.

American dog ticks, the most common in Ohio, are also the largest, and tend to be found in areas of high grass or brush. Adult blacklegged ticks or deer ticks prefer deciduous forests, especially areas with leaf litter are approximately the size of a sesame seed and nymphal ticks are approximately the size of a poppy seed.

The Columbiana County Health Department recommends avoiding tick-infested areas such as tall grass and dense vegetation/woodlands. Tuck your pants into sock tops or boots, Wear light-colored clothing to make it easier to find crawling ticks. Use repellants and follow label instructions carefully. Check yourself, your children and pets frequently for ticks. Bathe or shower after exposure to tick habitat (preferably within two hours) to wash off and more easily find ticks that may be crawling on you.

If a tick is attached, remove it as soon as possible (within 24 hours) to reduce your risk of infection.

Use the following method for removal:

Shield fingers with a paper towel or use tweezers. Grasp the tick close to the skin. With steady pressure, pull the tick straight up and out.

Avoid crushing the tick. Do not use a hot match, cigarette, nail polish, petroleum jelly or other products to remove a tick.

After removing a tick, thoroughly disinfect the bite site and wash hands with soap and water.

The state health department's Zoonotic Disease Program, which tracks the spread of tick-borne diseases as well as mosquito-borne illnesses like West Nile virus, will lose its funding July 1 because of state budget cuts.

The Columbiana County Health can identify ticks. Please contact the us at (330) 424-0272 or stop by our office Monday thru Friday 8am to 4pm at 7360 State Route 45 Lisbon, Ohio 44432 for more information.

