

Infectious Diseases

Series

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LYME DISEASE



CDC

LYME DISEASE

Lyme disease is spread by the bite of a deer tick. When the deer tick is in its nymphal stage, it is about the size of a pinhead, making it very hard to detect. The larger adult deer tick can also spread the disease. Lyme disease was first found in the United States in 1975, after a mysterious outbreak of arthritis near Lyme, Connecticut. If you get Lyme disease, you may feel tired, have chills, fever, headache, and muscle and joint pain. You may also get a rash that looks like a bull's-eye surrounding the spot of the tick bite. Campers, hikers, and people who live or work in wooded, brushy, and grassy areas are most at risk. You can do a lot to avoid getting Lyme disease. When in a "ticky" area, wear light-colored clothes so you can see ticks more easily. Wear long sleeves and long pants. Tuck your pants in your socks or boots. Use bug repellent and walk in the center of trails to avoid as much grass and brush as you can. After being in a "ticky" area, check your body for ticks and remove any with tweezers.

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WEST NILE VIRUS



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West Nile virus was first found in the United States in New York City in 1999. Since then it has spread throughout the United States. This virus can cause illness and sometimes fatal brain infection in people, horses, birds, and other animals. You get West Nile virus by being bitten by an infected mosquito, but there is no evidence to suggest that it can be spread from person to person or from animal to person. If you get infected with West Nile virus, you may have a bad headache, be sick to your stomach, and be very tired. You can reduce your chances of getting infected with West Nile virus by protecting yourself from mosquito bites. To avoid mosquito bites, eliminate sources of standing water like old cans or unused swimming pools from around your home, wear long-sleeved shirts and pants, and apply bug repellent on your skin and clothing when you are outdoors and mosquitoes are biting, especially in the evening, at night, and in the early morning.