

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TICKBORNE ILLNESSES ON THE RISE; CRATER HEALTH DISTRICT ADVISES PUBLIC TO USE PRECAUTIONS THIS SUMMER TO GUARD AGAINST TICKS.

(Petersburg, VA) There are several tickborne illnesses that can affect the health of the population. Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF), and Tularemia are a few of the tickborne illnesses that different ticks may carry in the state of Virginia.

Crater Health District urges the public to take precautionary steps to prevent tick bites:

- Always use insect repellent when outdoors in the summer months, especially if in habitats ticks frequent such as forested areas and places with long grass.
 - Repellent containing up to 50% DEET for adults or less than 30% DEET for children is recommended. Repellents containing other active ingredients such as bioUID, oil of lemon eucalyptus, IR3535, picaridin, or 2-undecanone may also be effective.
- Wear long pants and shoes with socks and tuck pant legs into socks or boots. Tuck in shirts and wear light-colored clothing so that ticks are visible.
- Conduct thorough tick checks and shower with soap after you have been outdoors. It is important to do this as soon as possible; the likelihood of transmission of tickborne diseases increases the longer the tick is attached to the skin.

Attached to this release is the VDH resource "Ticks and Tickborne Diseases." If you have been bitten by a tick, safely remove the tick using the steps provided in the attachment. VDH and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention do not routinely test ticks for pathogens; instead, it is important to identify the tick species since each tick species carries different pathogens. The VDH Vectorborne Team provides tick identification services for citizens in Virginia, which can be accessed here:

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/ticks/tick-identification/virginia-tick-survey/>

If you experience symptoms after being exposed to a tick, seek medical attention. If possible, take the tick or the ID provided from the Virginia Tick Survey to help your provider determine the diagnosis and the best course of treatment.

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