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## Health dept. urges residents to take precautions against ticks

As the weather gets warmer and locals engage in more outdoor activities, the Ocean County Health Department is urging residents to take precautions to protect themselves from tick bites and Lyme disease this summer.

While everyone is susceptible to tick bites, campers, hikers, and people who work in gardening and in other leafy, outdoor venues are at the greatest risk of being bitten. Lyme disease is an infection caused by the bite of an infected female deer tick.

Lyme disease was first recognized in Lyme, Conn. in 1975. It is transmitted by a group of closely related species of ticks known as ixodes. Ticks in this group — deer ticks, western black-legged ticks, and black-

legged ticks — are much smaller than the common dog or cattle ticks, and attach to any part of the body, often areas such as the groin, armpits and scalp.

"The majority of cases of Lyme disease in Ocean County have been found in Toms River, followed by Jackson, and Manchester — although Lyme disease is reported from all areas of Ocean County," said Ocean County Health Department Public Information Officer Leslie Terjesen.

"In addition, the last statistics available, from 2008, show that the majority of people reported to have confirmed cases or probable cases of Lyme disease were between the ages of 50 and 59," Ms. Terjesen said. "That changed from the year 2007, where the highest amount diagnosed with Lyme disease were between the ages of 30 and 39."

"Although these statistics show the majority [of cases are] in these age groups, all age groups were affected by Lyme disease," she said.

According to the health department, Lyme disease can cause fever, headaches, fatigue, swollen lymph nodes and a characteristic skin rash, sometimes called a "bull's-eye" rash.

A bull's-eye rash is an early-stage symptom and usually appears at the site of the tick bite, within three to 30 days. Not everyone gets this rash, but even if one does, it may go unnoticed.

Left untreated, the infection can spread to joints, the heart, and the nervous system. Permanent damage to the joints or the nervous system can develop in patients with late Lyme disease, although the disease is rarely, if ever, fatal.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, patients treated with antibiotics in the early stages of the infection usually recover rapidly and completely.

"As the summer months approach, it is time to take precautions against Lyme disease," Freeholder Gerry P. Little, liaison to the Ocean County Health Department, said recently. "It is important to educate yourself about Lyme disease and try to avoid concentrated tick areas to avoid getting bitten."

Ms. Terjesen suggested residents take the following precautions to protect themselves from ticks:

- Avoid wooded, brushy and grassy areas in the summer months. Keep high grass mowed.
- Wear light-colored clothing that will make it easier to spot ticks.

- Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts.
- Tie long hair back and wear a hat.
- Tuck pant legs into socks or shoes, and tuck shirts into pants.
- Spray insect repellent containing DEET on clothes and exposed skin other than the face, or treat clothes with permethrin, which kills ticks on contact. [Check manufacturer's label for special instructions or warnings.]
- Walk in the center of trails to avoid brush and grass.
- Remove your clothing, and wash and dry them at high temperatures after being outdoors.
- Do a careful body check for ticks after outdoor activities.

Ms. Terjesen pointed out that proper tick removal is essential. Using tweezers, grasp the tick close to the skin, pull straight back, and avoid crushing the tick's body.

Do not twist the tick in removing it, as parts of the tick might remain in the skin. Save the tick for possible identification by a doctor.

Household pets can get Lyme disease, too. Typical symptoms in animals include joint soreness and lameness, fever, and loss of appetite.

Regularly checking pets for all types of ticks reduces the risk of infection for both pet and owner. Preventing tick exposure with topical and/or collar products is very important in preventing Lyme disease in dogs.

## — PROGRAM — From Page 10

that walking maps are being produced to allow residents and visitors to the borough a chance to exercise and see some of the lovely sights in Bay Head along the way.

"Bay Head is a beautiful town," Mrs. Charlton said.

Councilwoman Green, liaison to the Mayor's Wellness Committee, said they "have created tremendous awareness of wellness outreach in the community."

Emily Littman, director of the Mayor's Wellness Campaign program at the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute, attended the first day of camp in Bay Head this week.

Ms. Littman said her agency has been encouraging public health initiatives at the local level.

"Our motto is, 'It Takes A Village,' in that an entire town can participate in raising awareness of these programs that bring a healthy lifestyle to the community," Ms. Littman said Tuesday.

Further, she remarked that in a matter of months, Bay Head has adopted positive public health initiatives that would take other communities years to get off the ground.

"It's truly my pleasure to be here," Ms. Littman said Tuesday. "I thrive off the town being so enthusiastic."

More information on recreation-related activities offered through the borough can be found on the Bay Head website: [www.bayheadnj.org/bhunj/](http://www.bayheadnj.org/bhunj/)

## County Parks & Rec Dept. offers tennis classes, fest

Freeholder John J. Bartlett Jr. announced recently that the Ocean County Department of Parks and Recreation will be conducting a "Travelin' Tennis" program, throughout July and August.

The program includes classes that feature tennis instruction, and the use of rackets and balls.

Pre-registering is mandatory, and rain days cannot be rescheduled. The participation fee is \$14 per child.

The program meets in two sessions. The 10 a.m. class is for children ages 6 to 10, and the 11 a.m. class is for children ages 6-15.

To register, send a check made payable to the "County of Ocean" to Ocean County Parks and Recreation, 1198 Bandon Road, Toms River, 08753.

Please provide name, address and daytime telephone number,

along with the program number when registering.

For a complete list of program times and dates, visit the website at [www.oceancountyparks.org](http://www.oceancountyparks.org).

The Department of Parks and Recreation will then conduct a Tennis Festival for children on Wednesday, Aug. 4, at Ocean County Park, in Lakewood.

The program is for children aged 6 to 10, and will test the tennis skills of each participant.

Games such as tennis volleyball, tennis horse, beat the pro and target contests will be featured.

Rackets and balls will be provided.

The festival will take place from 1 to 2 p.m., at the park's tennis complex.

The fee for each child is \$5.

To register, send a check made payable to the "County of Ocean" to: Ocean County Parks and Recreation, 1198 Bandon Road, Toms River, 08753.

Please provide name, address and daytime telephone number, along with the program number [233502-3A] when registering.

To receive more information or to receive a Parks & Recreation Newsletter, call 732-506-9090, or visit the website.

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