



Preventing Lyme Disease

Working outdoors in spring, summer and fall can expose you to Lyme disease. In Manitoba, Lyme disease is spread by blacklegged ticks.

Lyme disease is a serious and potentially fatal disease if left untreated.

Prompt removal of attached ticks (within 24 to 36 hours) can decrease the risk of infection.



Risk Assessment/Hazards

Tick bites are usually painless and most people do not know they have been bitten. When a person is infected, symptoms usually develop within one to two weeks and include the following:

- fever;
- headache;
- muscle and joint pains;
- fatigue;
- swollen glands;
- a skin rash, especially one that looks like a red bull's eye.

Workers are encouraged to seek immediate medical attention if any of these symptoms develop. Early treatment usually results in a complete recovery.



Control Measures/Safeguards

What should employers do?

- Determine if your workers are at risk of exposure to ticks;
- Ensure workers are educated to understand:
 - the risk of tick bites and Lyme disease,
 - how to identify blacklegged ticks,
 - how to prevent tick bites or minimize exposure,
 - how to treat a tick bite.

What should workers do?

- If possible, avoid long grass and low bushes;
- Wear light- coloured clothing to help find ticks more easily;
- Wear closed-toed shoes, long sleeve shirts that fit tightly around the wrist, and long-legged pants tucked into your socks or boots;
- Use insect repellents containing DEET to repel ticks. Apply to both clothes and skin. Always read the label and follow instructions for use;
- Check for ticks on and under clothing and pay attention to the armpits, in and around ears, behind knees, areas with body hair, and the navel and groin areas;
- Take a shower shortly after being outdoors;
- Wash clothes promptly and put them in the dryer with heat to help kill any ticks that may remain;
- Carefully remove ticks found attached to the skin. Gently use fine pointed tweezers to grasp head of the tick as close to the skin as possible. Pull slowly to remove the whole tick.
- If any of the symptoms of Lyme disease develop, contact your doctor immediately.

Demonstrate

Inspect the project site for places where ticks can breed.



SAFETY TALK

Print and review this talk with your staff, sign off and file for COR™ / SECOR audit purposes.

Date: _____

Supervisor: _____

Performed By: _____

Location: _____

Name & Number of Safety Talk

Employee Name:

Employee Signature:

Concerns:

Corrective Actions:
