May is Lyme Disease Awareness Month. With the arrival of spring comes milder weather. People are beginning their outdoor activities like walking, hiking, running, cycling, gardening, or landscaping. As more people head outdoors, the risk of incidental human-tick interactions increases as well. Ticks begin to awake from winter dormancy with the arrival of milder spring weather. More tick encounters may lead to an increase in tick-borne diseases such as Lyme Disease, Anaplasmosis, Ehrlichiosis and Babesiosis.

The Benzie Leelanau District Health Department would like to educate individuals who enjoy nature and the outdoors about necessary precautions to prevent tick bites. Proper precautions include:

- Use repellent that contains 20 percent or more DEET, picaridin, or IR3535 on exposed skin for protection that lasts several hours.
- Wear clothing that has been treated with permethrin.
- Look for ticks on your body. See the image to the right for areas that ticks tend to bite.
- Put your clothes in the dryer on high heat for 60 minutes to kill any remaining ticks.
- Take a shower as soon as you can after coming indoors.

Questions regarding ticks and other vectors in Benzie and Leelanau counties should be directed to the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department’s Environmental Health Division at 231-882-2105. Health related questions should be directed to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services at 1-800- 648-6942.

Additional information regarding ticks and Lyme disease can be found here:

- [https://www.michigan.gov/lyme](https://www.michigan.gov/lyme)
- [https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-71548_54783_54784_78428_78430_83603---,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-71548_54783_54784_78428_78430_83603---,00.html)
- [https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/index.html)

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