

DESCRIPTION

Tick-borne diseases are a group of illnesses that people contract from ticks. They occur in all areas of the United States and affect people of all ages. These diseases are more common in the spring and summer months when ticks bites are most common. Some of the tick-borne diseases in the United States are Lyme Disease, Ehrlichiosis (er-lick-ee-o-sis), Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever and tularemia (too-la-ree-me-a).

FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- A rash that starts as a small red spot. The spot expands and becomes round or oval in shape with a clear center. It resembles a bulls-eye. The rash may also develop on other places of the body.
- Mild flu-like symptoms may occur (fever, headache, stiff neck, fatigue, muscle and joint pain).
- Single-joint pain or body pain.
- Central nervous system symptoms that may range from headache to loss of consciousness.

RISK INCREASES WITH

People who spend time in areas where tick bites are common (either for work or recreation) are at higher risk.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

- Wear protective clothing with tight collars and cuffs.
- Use effective insect repellents, such as DEET, in areas with ticks.
- Have dogs and cats wear tick-repellant collars.
- Carefully exam your skin after spending time in the yard or other wooded areas.
- Promptly remove any ticks that have attached themselves to the skin and thoroughly wash the area where the tick was attached using soap and water. If the tick is removed from the skin in 36 hours, there is usually no infection.

GENERAL TREATMENT MEASURES

- Your health care provider will do a physical exam and ask questions about your symptoms and activities. Medical tests may include blood studies and others to help confirm the diagnosis.
- Early treatment with antibiotic drugs is important to prevent symptoms from getting worse.
- Treatment with nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, such as ibuprofen, or Steroidal medications may reduces inflammation and easy discomfort.
- Use crutches to keep weight off affected joints, if necessary.
- Heat relieves joint pain. Take warm baths or showers, or use heating pads.
- Rest may be necessary while symptoms persist.

SEEK EMERGENCY TREATMENT IF:

- New or unexplained symptoms develop or current symptoms become worse.