



How Lyme-savvy are patients with ticks?

By Laura Longsworth | September 14, 2017

Tick season may already have peaked in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states after a highly active spring, according to data from the athenahealth network.

But cooler weather doesn't mean that folks heading into long grass and forests are out of the woods yet. The blacklegged ticks that carry *Borrelia burgdorferi*, the virus that causes Lyme disease, can remain active as long as temperatures are above freezing.

How do people react after a tick bite, and what state of mind can physicians expect in patients calling or coming into the office? An informal video survey of dog walkers, gardeners and, yes, even a shepherd at the Rock Meadow conservation area in Belmont, Massachusetts, suggests there's a healthy range of "Lyme literacy" among the outdoor set.

Most people said they would contact their primary care physician after a tick encounter, and most would expect to receive antibiotics. (Be forewarned: Parents of children with suspected tick bites can sometimes be overzealous in requesting antibiotics for their offspring, even when symptoms aren't yet evident.)

To keep tabs on Lyme activity in your area, check out our interactive 2016/2017 Lyme Disease Dashboard as it tracks the spread of Lyme disease across the United States week by week.



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