



# News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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## **CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH CAUTIONS CALIFORNIANS ABOUT TICKS AND TICK-BORNE DISEASES**

SACRAMENTO – Dr. Mark Horton, director of the California Department of Public Health, today warned Californians who are participating in warm weather outdoor activities to take precautions to prevent tick bite-related ailments, such as Lyme disease.

“As the weather gets warmer, I remind Californians to take measures to reduce their exposure to ticks when they venture outdoors to hike, camp and participate in other outdoor activities,” Horton said.

Ticks are small, insect-like creatures that are found in naturally vegetated areas throughout California. They prefer cool, moist environments, shaded grasses, shrubs and leaf litter. Ticks attach to humans and other animals and feed on their blood over several days. Spring is when the young tiny nymph form is active.

Individuals may become infected with the bacteria that cause Lyme disease when they are bitten by an infected western black-legged tick, the only tick in California that transmits Lyme disease. Early symptoms of Lyme disease often include a spreading rash accompanied by flulike symptoms such as fever and body aches.

While Lyme disease is the most common tick-borne illness in California, tick bites can cause a variety of human illnesses.

When in area where ticks may be found, the following measures should be taken to reduce exposure to tick bites:

- Stay on the trail
- Wear light-colored clothing so ticks can easily be seen
- Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts. Tuck pant legs into boots or socks and tuck shirts into pants.
- Use a repellent registered for use against ticks
- Inspect yourself frequently for ticks while in tick habitat, especially on the scalp

Additional information, including photos, is available at [www.cdph.ca.gov](http://www.cdph.ca.gov)

