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PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

To: Local Media Outlets
From: Central Michigan District Health Department
RE: CMDHD Reminding Public About Tick Danger
Release Date: May 14, 2024

CMDHD is reminding the public about the danger of tick bites

Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) is reminding the public about the danger of tick bites. The tick population has come on strong this year. The mild winter and spring weather has allowed more ticks to survive. Take steps now to protect family members and pets from tick bites.

Ticks can carry a number of diseases including Lyme Disease, Ehrlichiosis, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, and others. Many of these diseases begin with flu-like symptoms such as fever, chills, headaches, and muscle aches. Left untreated, more serious symptoms can occur including long term disability and even death. Consult with your doctor if you have been bitten by a tick or you develop an unexplained skin rash that may look like a bullseye.

Removing ticks promptly when found attached can reduce the chance of the tick transferring a tick-borne disease. Ticks can remain attached for hours to days with possible disease transmission risk increasing the longer they are attached. A tick can be removed by grasping the head as close to your skin as possible and pull slowly straight out. Do not squeeze the body or twist as this can force fluids back through their feeding tube. Clean the bite area and your hands with soap and water or rubbing alcohol. Once removed it is a good idea to seal the tick in a clear container for identification. Pictures of ticks can be submitted by email for identification following the instructions [here](#). Identification of the tick will tell you what disease that species may carry. Not all ticks are infected with a disease-causing organism.

Prevention is the best strategy to avoid tick bites. Some steps you can take include.

- Avoid areas that may harbor ticks such as thick brush or tall grass.
- Keep grass cut and remove yard debris often.
- Use a repellent that contains at least 20% DEET, picaridin, or IR3535.

Please visit us online at www.cmdhd.org.

- Shower as soon as you come indoors and do a tick inspection.

Some simple steps and regular monitoring for ticks after coming indoors will help you and your family have a safe and enjoyable experience outdoors all summer and fall. Ticks can remain active through September and beyond when there are several days above freezing. Don't forget to consult with your vet on how to protect your dog or cat if they spend time outside. They can be exposed to the same diseases and be a way to bring ticks into the home.

For more information visit Michigan's Emerging Diseases website at www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases and this prevention fact sheet found [here](#).

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon. Visit our website at www.cmdhd.org and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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To request an interview, please visit our website (cmdhd.org) and fill out the [Media Interview Request Form](#).