

Thursday, May 31, 2018

Be tick smart this summer

Spring tick surveillance program confirms blacklegged ticks found in York Region

Newmarket – The Regional Municipality of York spring tick surveillance results show blacklegged ticks are present in natural, wooded areas in York Region. The Region advises residents to take precautions when enjoying the outdoors this season.

York Region Public Health is carrying out its spring tick surveillance and has found blacklegged ticks across three locations in the City of Vaughan. Ticks were found at the Kortright Centre for Conservation, Boyd Conservation Area and Bindertwine Park. Blacklegged ticks were also found in the Town of Georgina at the York Region Metro Road Forestry Tract, in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville at the Porritt York Region Forest Tract and in the Township of King at the Cold Creek Conservation Area.

Spring tick surveillance is being conducted across additional natural public spaces including municipal parks, conservation areas, Regional forest tracts and ravines. The [Lyme disease webpage](#) is continually updated with locations of where blacklegged ticks are found.

“Ticks found through our spring surveillance program have been sent to the National Microbiology Lab to test for the bacteria that causes Lyme disease,” said Dr. Karim Kurji, York Region’s Medical Officer of Health. “Not all ticks are infected with the bacteria, so not all tick bites spread Lyme disease. However, residents are advised to take precautions to protect both people and pets from tick bites”.

Keep these tips in mind when visiting wooded or brushy natural areas:

- Wear light-coloured pants and long-sleeved tops to help spot ticks
- Choose closed footwear and tuck your pants into your socks
- Use an insect repellent containing DEET or icaridin
- Search your body for ticks, especially the groin, scalp, back and underarm areas
- Bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors to wash off unattached ticks
- Safely remove attached ticks from your body as quickly as possible
- Check your pets for ticks

York Region Public Health conducts active tick surveillance in the spring and fall and passive tick surveillance year-round. More information on Lyme disease, personal protection and tick removal is available at york.ca/lymedisease or by contacting York Region Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653; TTY 1-866-512-6228.

The Regional Municipality of York consists of nine local cities and towns and provides a variety of programs and services to 1.2 million residents and 51,000 businesses with 620,000 employees. More information about the Region’s key service areas is available at york.ca/regionalservices