

Information on Ticks and Lyme Disease from Mrs Evans

Ticks

As we are now in the Summer season when ticks are most active, we need to inform you that on a trip this week, a tick became attached to the arm of a child in Reception.

It was safely removed at the walk in clinic in Weymouth.

We would like you be vigilant if your child is visiting any natural outdoor environment.

Ticks are small, blood-sucking arthropods related to spiders, mites and scorpions. There are many different species of tick living in Britain, each preferring to feed on the blood of different animal hosts. If given the opportunity, some of them will feed on human blood too.

To the naked eye the larvae look like minute pale spiders, not much bigger than a full stop. Nymphs are slightly larger, pinhead or poppy seed size. Larvae have six legs and nymphs and adults eight. It is the nymph which is most likely to bite you.

Lyme Disease

Lyme disease, or Lyme borreliosis, is a bacterial infection spread to humans by infected ticks.

In nearly all known cases, Lyme Disease is transmitted to humans following the bite of a tick. In a population of ticks, only some will carry the infection. The risk of infection is greater the longer the tick remains attached.

Lyme disease can be contracted in parks, gardens and rural areas across most of the country (wherever deer, hares or rabbits can enter).

Many people with early-stage Lyme disease develop a distinctive circular rash at the site of the tick bite, usually around three to 30 days after being bitten. This is known as erythema migrans.

Symptoms

The rash is often described as looking like a bull's-eye on a dart board. The affected area of skin will be red and the edges may feel slightly raised.

The size of the rash can vary significantly and it may expand over several days or weeks. Typically it's around 15cm (6 inches) across, but it can be much larger or smaller than this. Some people may develop several rashes in different parts of their body.

However, around one in three people with Lyme disease won't develop this rash.

Some people with Lyme disease also experience [flu-like symptoms](#) in the early stages, such as tiredness (fatigue), muscle pain, joint pain, [headaches](#), a high temperature (fever), chills and [neck stiffness](#).

If you would like further information on ticks and Lyme Disease we recommend these websites :

www.LymeDiseaseAction.org.uk

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Lyme-disease/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

