



## Health Advisory: Tick-Borne Disease Risk High

Minnesota Department of Health Tue May 20 8:30 CDT 2014

### Action Steps:

**Local and tribal health departments:** Please forward to hospitals and clinics in your jurisdiction.

**Hospital and clinics:** Please distribute to healthcare professionals, particularly those in family practice, convenience clinics, urgent care, and emergency departments.

**Healthcare providers:** Be on the lookout for cases of tick-borne disease, especially during the next 10 weeks. Report cases of tick-borne disease to MDH.

Tick-borne disease cases returned to record or near record levels in 2013 and the peak risk season is just beginning for 2014. An MDH news release will come out later this morning with 2013 case numbers:

- Lyme disease: 1,431 cases (surpasses past record of 1,293 cases in 2010)
- Human anaplasmosis: 627 cases
- Babesiosis: 64 cases

Heavy snowfall last winter likely provided protection against cold winter temperatures for the blacklegged ticks (also called deer ticks) that transmit several disease agents. This year's wetter conditions should also provide the ticks with the more humid conditions they need to thrive and actively feed. The peak risk of tick-borne disease will occur over the next few weeks as the nymph life stage actively feeds in forested regions of the state. Patients exposed to the agents of Lyme disease, human anaplasmosis, babesiosis, Powassan disease, and human ehrlichiosis (due to the *Ehrlichia muris*-like agent) will be presenting to your facilities now. Today's MDH news release is urging anyone who spends time in wooded or brushy parts of Minnesota to begin taking precautions against ticks (especially use of tick repellents).

For more information on tick-borne disease, please refer to the MDH site at:

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/dtopics/tickborne/index.html>

Specific tick-borne disease information for medical providers, including notes on appropriate testing for Powassan virus and various tick-borne disease agents, is available at:

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/dtopics/tickborne/hcp.html>

Report all tick-borne disease to MDH:

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/dtopics/reportable/forms/tickborneform.html>