

August, 2013

Parents' and Students' Advisory

LYME and other TICK-BORNE ILLNESSES (TBI)

Lyme disease and other TBI are transmitted to humans by TICK BITES.

Lyme and TBI are PREVENTABLE if simple steps are taken to reduce exposure to tick bites. Such measures may include:

- Dressing in light-colored clothing, including tucking pants into socks
- Using a repellent on clothing and/or skin (see websites for info)
- Minimizing time spent in dense brush, walk in the center of forest trails
- Showering within 2 hours of possible exposure to wash away any as-of-yet unattached ticks

MOST IMPORTANTLY, it is essential to perform a TICK CHECK on yourself, your children and your pets after having spent any time outdoors.

If, especially after a possible tick bite, you develop an unexplained rash, any joint or generalized flu-like symptoms, please seek medical attention. Lyme disease and many TBI can be treated highly successfully if diagnosed in a timely manner.

For more information about Lyme disease and other TBIs, including **signs and symptoms** (which are variable and may or may not include the circumferential/bullseye rash) please refer to:

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/id/epidemiology/ticks/>

The Dover and Sherborn Boards of Health distribute **Tick Identification Cards** that show the actual shapes and sizes of various ticks in different stages and provide tips for your protection. In Dover, they are available at the Town Clerk office, Post Office, Library, Police Department, and Board of Health office. In Sherborn, they are available at the Board of Health office. Please be sure to procure one of those cards for you and your family.

During the past two summers the Lyme Disease Committee of the Dover Board of Health conducted studies of tick density around the town's sports fields and children's play areas including Chickering fields and the Dover/Sherborn HS where spectators tend to gather. The results convincingly showed that *shady areas have a greater number of ticks than do sunny areas.*

Your Dover and Sherborn Boards of Health