

PLAYING IT **SAFE**

Be safe and healthy on the job with these helpful tips provided by
Dan Lawrie Insurance Brokers

Outdoor Construction Workers, Get the Facts about Lyme Disease

Important information for outdoor workers

Lyme disease was first discovered after an unusual outbreak of arthritis in Lyme, Connecticut in 1975. Today, Lyme disease is widespread across Canada, but the highest risk of exposure is in wooded areas during spring and summer months.

All About Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is a bacterium typically carried by mice and other small rodents. It is transmitted through ticks that have previously bitten infected animals and then bite humans. When these infected insects attach to the human body, they transmit the disease within 36 to 48 hours. Young ticks are prevalent in late spring and early summer, although adult ticks can transmit the infection as well. Adult ticks are larger and much easier to spot, but young ticks can be as small as a pin head.

Signs and Symptoms

Symptoms of Lyme disease typically develop within two weeks of the tick bite. Although a majority of those infected develop a rash in the shape of a bull's-eye surrounding the bite, 20 to 40 per cent of people do not exhibit this symptom at all. Instead, they may develop flu-like symptoms, including fever, chills, swollen lymph nodes, neck stiffness, fatigue, headaches and migrating joint aches or muscle aches.

If you suspect that you may have contracted Lyme disease, seek medical attention. A simple blood test can confirm whether you have the disease. If you test positive, the medical professional will prescribe antibiotics to kill the infection. Left untreated, Lyme disease can cause arthritis, muscle pain, heart disease and brain and nerve disorders.

Preventing Lyme Disease

Here are some things you can do to reduce your risk of contracting the infection:

- Avoid tick habitats, which include brushy, overgrown, grassy and woody areas.
- Remove leaves, tall grass and brush from work areas.
- Wear light-coloured clothing to see ticks more easily.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and tuck your pants into your boots to make it more difficult for ticks to reach your skin.
- Wear closed-toed shoes or boots when working in grassy or wooded areas.
- Use tick and bug repellent on your skin. Although permethrin is not safe to use on your skin, it is effective at deterring ticks when used on your clothing.
- After working outside, check body areas where ticks are commonly found. This includes behind the knees, between fingers and toes, armpits, behind ears, on the neck and in any hairy areas.
- Shower well, and wash and dry your clothing at high temperatures after you have been working outside.

Additional questions? Ask us, we're here to help! For additional information, no-cost advice or for a free, no-obligation quote, please call
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After Working Outdoors...

Do a tick check by carefully looking over your whole body. If you find any, remove them with a tweezers and clean the area with an antiseptic. Keep an eye on the area for the next few days and be on the lookout for a rash and achy flu-like symptoms. If you feel sick or notice a rash, seek medical attention immediately to test for Lyme disease.

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