



## PUTNAM COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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A PHAB-ACCREDITED HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Tick Season Returns; Personal Precautions Advised

BREWSTER, NY— More than a dozen tickborne illnesses have been identified by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention, including five that infect residents in the Hudson Valley. While Lyme disease is the most common and the most well-known, anaplasmosis, ehrlichiosis and babesiosis are increasing as well. Powassan disease, a rarer and potentially deadly infection, is also carried by the same black-legged tick, or “deer tick,” that transmits Lyme disease, anaplasmosis and babesiosis.

“We treasure the natural splendor and lush landscape of Putnam County and encourage our residents and visitors to enjoy the parks and trails, and to take in the outdoor beauty of Putnam County. We also urge people to learn about and take precautions to prevent tick-borne illnesses,” says Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell.

“Though tick populations vary each season, we know that reducing exposure to ticks is the best defense against Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses,” says Health Commissioner Michael J. Nesheiwat, MD. “While the incidence of these diseases has been on the rise, the advice remains the same: Be vigilant about personal protection and make it a habit to check your clothing, your gear, and your body for ticks.”

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the use of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents such as those containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, and Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (OLE). “People frequently spending time in grassy, brushy, or wooded areas should consider treating clothing and gear with products containing 0.5% permethrin,” adds Dr. Nesheiwat. Permethrin can be used to treat boots, clothing, and camping gear and remains protective through several washings. Alternatively, you can buy permethrin-treated clothing and gear. To find the repellent that is right for you, search the Environmental Protection Agency database <https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/find-repellent-right-you>.

The Putnam County Department of Health works closely with healthcare providers to share the most up-to-date recommendations and best practices for diagnosing and reporting tickborne illnesses. A physician makes the final diagnosis based on a combination of available tests, observation of the patient, and the patient history and description of symptoms.

The most common symptoms of Lyme disease include fever/chills, aches and pains, and a bulls-eye rash. Due to the prevalence of Lyme disease in this area, residents who have been bitten by a tick and develop any of these symptoms within 30 days should visit their healthcare provider. Providers will evaluate symptoms and order diagnostic tests if indicated. For more details regarding the symptoms and guidelines for other tickborne illnesses, visit the CDC’s webpage <https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/symptoms.html>.

The mission of the Putnam County Department of Health, nationally accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB), is to improve and protect the health of the Putnam County community, composed of nearly 100,000 residents. Core services include community health assessment, disease surveillance and control, emergency preparedness, environmental health protection, family health promotion and health education. For more information, please visit our County website at [www.putnamcountyny.com](http://www.putnamcountyny.com); or visit our social media sites on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/putnamhealth](https://www.facebook.com/putnamhealth) and Twitter @PutnamHealthNY.

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