

TINY TICKS PUT OREGON IN DANGER

It's so small that you might not even see it, but it can mean big trouble.

The culprit is Ixodes, a family of deer ticks that can transmit Lyme disease to both humans and animals. Although the disease is rarely fatal, left untreated it can be a road to agony.

Medical doctors and veterinarians have issued warnings about the disease, which struck more than 5,000 people last year.

"We do have cases in Oregon," Polk County veterinarian Ron Macedo said. "But it's nowhere close to an epidemic."

But there is cause for alarm, both for people and their pets. In fact, researchers have found that dogs are six times more likely to get Lyme disease than their owners.

The alarm is sounding because 43 states have reported cases of Lyme disease, and Oregon is one of them. The situation is regarded as critical by some accounts, and serious by others. No one is ignoring the threat.

"The problem is that it's a relatively new disease, or it was there and we didn't know what we were looking at," Macedo said.

It was not identified as Lyme disease until 1975 when a group of people near Lyme, Conn., contracted it.

Research has found that an organism inside the tick - spirochete - is the cause of the disease.

Animals and people have basically the same symptoms. In most cases, early symptoms include a round or oval rash. While easily seen on a person, it can go undetected under a dog's thick hair, and some dogs don't even develop it. The rash can be several inches in diameter.

With the rash can come other symptoms, such as fever, fatigue, headaches, a stiff neck and muscle joint pains.

One of the problems, Macedo said, is that the symptoms mimic influenza.

"It's an arthritic type of thing, he said. "The signs are suggestive of arthritis, but it's not quite the same. The key is to pick it up early and not be thinking it's something else."

When the illness strikes an older dog, the owner might think it's just the effects of time. But Macedo suggests that the animal be checked.

"There will be pain in the joints, difficulty walking, high fever," Macedo said.

As the disease progresses, some patients will suffer meningitis, paralysis of the facial muscles and other neurological problems.

Late stages of the disease can produce heart damage, intense arthritis and even brain damage. Some of the effects are irreversible.

"In dogs, it will be lameness, extreme pain, anorexia, fever, fatigue and enlarged lymph nodes," Macedo said.

Unfortunately, the tick and the disease come with the territory that pulls people outdoors. Woods, brush and grassy areas are the habitat of the tick.

"Oregon is a beautiful place to grow things - plants and bugs," Macedo said. "And we do have the ticks, generally throughout the state."

The treatment for Lyme disease is antibiotics. Blood tests, while not particularly effective in the early stages of the disease, will show positive in the later stages.

But the real key, Macedo said, is protection.

In humans, that remains wearing proper clothing when you venture into the forests and grassy areas where the ticks live. Don't go barefoot or where sandals. Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants, and pull your socks over your pant legs so ticks cannot attach themselves to exposed skin.

Commercial insect repellents - those that contain the chemical DEET - can help as well.

If you are in areas where there might be ticks, shower afterward and check yourself for ticks. If you do have one on you, carefully remove it with tweezers.

The ticks, Macedo said, are about the size of the small letter "a" on a typewriter.

Dogs should be checked also, but Macedo said it would be next to impossible to find the tiny tick on a hairy dog. "Use flea and tick controls - powders, dips, sprays," he said.

Macedo does not recommend testing animals unless there is reason to believe the disease is present.

By Tom Forstrom - The Statesman Journal

Community Health Nurse, Carol Terp, would also like you to:

Forget about all those home remedies for tick removal: gasoline, petroleum jelly, kerosene, iodine, or a hot match. These have not been shown to be very effective, and may actually increase your chance of becoming infected by the tick.

The best method of decreasing the fear of Lyme disease is to have the tick you remove identified by specie. Save the tick in a small container or jar labeled with the date, the body location of the bite, and where you think the tick came from. Tape the cap and send the padded container through the mail to: Gary Parsons, Extension Entomology, 2046 Cordley Hall, Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR. 97331-2902.

Whether you're playing or working in the woods, take precautions to protect yourself from ticks:

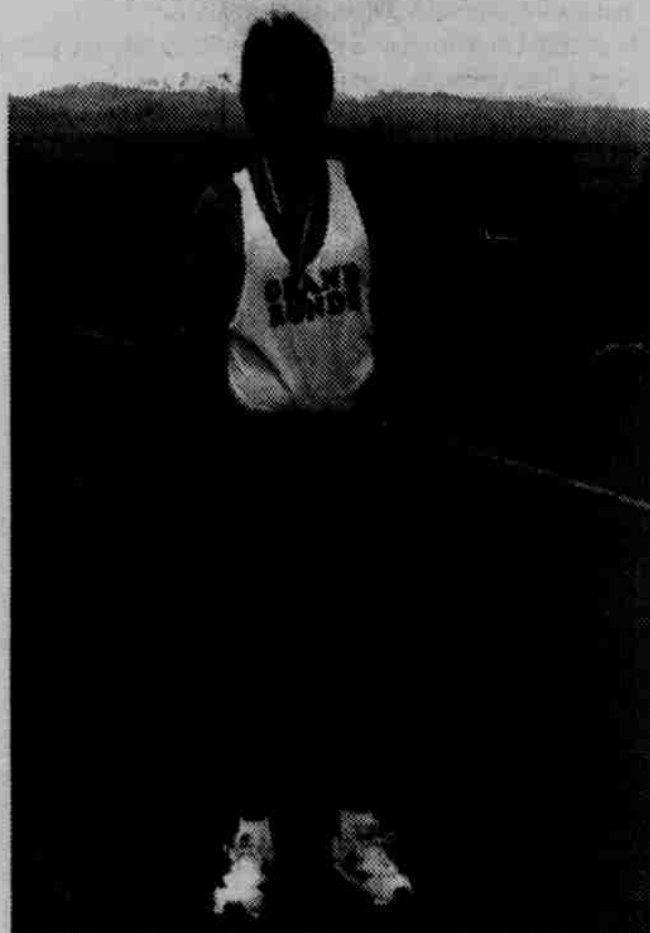
1. Cover your body as much as possible. Wear long pants and a long-sleeved shirt with buttoned cuffs. Tuck the shirt into your pants and your pants into your socks, shoes, or boots. A hat may help too, since ticks like to settle on the scalp.
2. In overgrown, brushy areas, try to stay near the center of the trail.
3. Check your children and pets after they have been outdoors. Remove ticks from them as you would from yourself.

One of the best ways to ward off ticks is to use an insect repellent containing Deet (short for N,N-diethyltoluamide) sprayed on your shirt, pants, socks, shoes or boots. Apply repellents sparingly, if at all, to your skin. They're safer, more effective, and longer lasting when used on clothing. Be especially careful with infants and children; don't spray them repeatedly over long periods, and don't use excessive amounts.

AIDS PREVENTION EFFORT UNDERWAY IN INDIAN COUNTRY

The National Native American AIDS Prevention Center headquartered in Oakland, Calif., has begun efforts to educate Native Americans in how to prevent AIDS in their communities. Ruth Denny who has been named project coordinator for the National Indian AIDS Media Consortium said the new consortium will establish and maintain a network of Indian reporters to disseminate accurate information on AIDS and to help design a national Native American AIDS prevention campaign. "We are now more than five years into the AIDS epidemic among American Indians, and many Indian communities have felt the devastating effects of AIDS. Because of the high drug and alcohol usage among Indian people, we are at a high risk for sexually transmitted diseases such as AIDS," Denny said.

She said Indian people could prevent the disease and the first step is to "educate ourselves, our children and our communities before AIDS devastates our people. The consortium will prepare press packets monthly that will consist of the latest AIDS data, statistics and Indian specific AIDS material and will be sent to consortium members at no cost. Further information can be obtained from Ruth Denny at 1530 East Franklin Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55404, (612) 871-0624.



Stan Kneeland recently competed in the Cascade Run-Off in Portland where he posted a time of 57:07 and finished in 398th place out of 7,500 competitors. Stan recently agreed to act as the official host of the Tribes' 2nd annual Spirit Mountain Fun Run/Walk for Health on August 19th, 1989.

KNEELAND PLAYS HOST FOR RUN

Tribal member Stan Kneeland of Warm Springs, Oregon recently competed in the Annual Cascade Run-Off on Sunday, June 18th in Portland, Oregon. Kneeland, who also recently competed in the Boston Marathon, ran the 15 Kilometer race (9.4 miles) in a time of 57:07. "I felt really good about my time because it was the first time that I had been clocked at that distance," said Kneeland.

Kneeland was one of 7,500 competitors in the race which was subject to a hard rain throughout the day. "I didn't push myself as hard as I could of because of the weather conditions on the course," explained Kneeland. "I tried to save my energy for the kick at the end of the race."

The race was won by 21 year old Alejandro Cruz of Mexico in a time of 42:38. Kneeland finished 14 minutes and 29 seconds later in 398th place. Tribal members in Grand Ronde are proud of Stan's accomplishments and are pleased that he has accepted our invitation to host the Tribes' 2nd Annual Spirit Mountain Fun Run/Walk on August 19th, 1988.

