



September 13, 2016

Re: City of North Oaks
Tick Task Force & Tick-borne Disease Prevention Activities

Dear Healthcare Provider,

We are writing to update you regarding the growing concern for tick-borne illnesses in North Oaks. We hope to enlist your support in keeping tick-borne illnesses on your mind when treating residents of North Oaks as well as surrounding communities that are heavily wooded.

The City of North Oaks has taken an aggressive, proactive approach to deal with this issue in our community. We are working with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and the University of Minnesota to assess the issue, implement a multi-tier integrated approach to reduce rates of tick-borne illness, and monitor the success of the program. In addition to enhanced measures to manage and reduce black-legged (deer) tick vectors such as deer and the white footed mouse populations, we are implementing additional measures including targeted pesticide applications in common areas of the City. Last but not least we have launched a comprehensive education program for all residents regarding personal protective measures when outside enjoying our natural resources.

Based on MDH data, normalized incidence rates of tick borne diseases in North Oaks are 134.3 per 100,000 which is 2-5 times higher than the immediate surrounding communities (Vadnais Heights (73.2 per 100,000), Shoreview (27.8 per 100,000), White Bear Lake (26.5 per 100,000), and Hugo/Centerville (24 per 100,000)). We recently conducted a community wide survey on tick-borne illnesses. There was an excellent response with 44% of households responding. It showed that 1 in 3 of the responding households had at least 1 family member diagnosed with a tick-borne illness. There were two peaks in age distribution, ages 5-15 and ages 40-65. Most residents were diagnosed with Lyme disease; however several were also diagnosed with Anaplasmosis, Babesiosis, and one with Ehrlichiosis. The rates of diagnosis have increased dramatically over the last 20 years, doubling when you compare the 2006-2010 to 2011-2015 time frames. Although our rates appear to be higher, this fits with trends seen throughout MN and the US as a whole.

Our survey revealed that treatment of residents by healthcare providers was primarily based on symptoms, but also on positive blood tests and embedded ticks without symptoms. The MDH and CDC both recommend early treatment if symptoms are present and there is known tick exposure. Blood tests may be negative within the first 2-3 weeks of illness and a blood test is not required for diagnosis of early Lyme disease.





Current International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society (ILADS) guidelines published in July 2014 recommend against the use of a single dose of doxycycline as prophylaxis after exposure. They also recommend a longer treatment course of antibiotics than has been suggested by the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) guidelines published in October 2006,

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1586/14787210.2014.940900>.

http://www.idsociety.org/uploadedfiles/idsa/guidelines-patient_care/pdf_library/lyme%20disease.pdf.

We recommend familiarizing yourself with both of these documents. For continuing education on this subject <https://www.lymecme.info/> is an excellent resource. The CDC also has excellent educational resources.

We encourage you to remind patients about the need for personal protective measures. The City of North Oaks website has several excellent resources available: www.cityofnorthoaks.com – For residents – Tick Task Force.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us. As a reminder, tick borne diseases should be reported to the Minnesota Department of Health so we can monitor incidence rates and assess prevention efforts.

Thank you in advance for your care of our residents.

Be well,

Brooke Moore, MD, MPH
Chair - City of North Oaks Tick Task Force

Rick Kingston, PharmD
North Oaks City Council Member
Council liaison to the Tick Task Force

Michael Egelston
Mayor, City of North Oaks

Michael Robertson
City Administrator, City of North Oaks

