

Dear Parent/Carer,

This is a reminder about the risk of Lyme Disease.

Ticks are commonly found on the pastures and woodlands we use as camp sites. Numbers are increasing, and it is likely that a small proportion of the ticks will carry Lyme Disease (caused by a bacterium). Cases of Lyme Disease are increasing across the UK. There is a small risk of contracting Lyme Disease from bites from infected ticks when they bite and stay attached. We take practical precautions at camp to minimise the risk of being bitten, and try to remove ticks promptly, but it is possible not to know that you have been bitten or have a tick attached, so it is important that everyone has an awareness of the possibility of tick bites and Lyme Disease.

Ticks returning home in clothes can be killed by warm drying for a few hours to reduce the risk of them attaching to people or pets at home.

Symptoms of Lyme Disease usually start within 3 to 30 days after a tick bite. A red 'bull's eye' rash (a red circular raised ring which can clear in the middle) can appear around the area of the tick bite and spread outwards. However, about a third of cases have no rash. As well as (or instead of) a rash, other early symptoms are generally flu-like; tiredness, (fatigue), muscle pain, joint pains, headaches, a high temperature (fever), chills, neck stiffness, paralysis of the facial muscles, typically only on one side of the face (Bell's palsy), nerve pains which may be sharp or prickly.

If you think your child is unwell after camp - seek treatment by attending the GP promptly and making them aware of the possibility of tick bites and the presenting symptoms (see also the letter to take to your GP in this situation). Treatment for Lyme Disease is with particular oral antibiotics. There are resources below which may help to your GP.

The reason that prompt treatment is important is that more serious symptoms may develop several weeks, months or even years later if Lyme disease is left untreated or is not treated early on.

Further information can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/552740/Ticksandourhealthinfoabouttickbites.pdf

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/463701/LymeDisease_SignsAndSymptoms.pdf

<http://www.lymediseaseaction.org.uk/>

(With guidance and support for health professionals as well as the public)

For health professionals:

<https://cks.nice.org.uk/lyme-disease>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lyme-disease-diagnosis-and-treatment>

Public Health England Suggested referral pathway:

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140714085912/http://www.hpa.org.uk/webc/HPAwebbFile/HPAweb_C/1317141297288

Yours sincerely,

FSC