



Message from the Medical Officer of Health

As summer comes to a close, autumn is a wonderful time to think about settling back into a routine and keeping focused on good health. As we all know, incidents of vector-borne diseases are greater in the spring and summer, and fall is when symptoms and patient visits increase due to exposures from outdoor summer activities. This postcard provides information on ticks and Lyme disease in Halton, as well as information on West Nile virus (WNV) activity. We typically start seeing human WNV cases now and well into October. Speaking of things that bite, I also want to remind you to please dial 311 when reporting animal bites on weekends and holidays. A happy and healthy autumn to you!



Dr. Hamidah Meghani
Medical Officer of Health, Halton Region

What's new for Halton physicians?



Ticks and Lyme disease in Halton Region

To support tick surveillance in Halton Region, please submit any ticks found on patients to the Halton Region Health Department for identification and testing. For information on removing and submitting a tick, visit halton.ca/lymedisease. For information on Lyme disease risk areas in Ontario and laboratory testing of human specimens, visit halton.ca/physicians.



West Nile virus activity in Halton Region

All reports of positive mosquito pools and human cases are posted weekly on our website through May to October each year. To stay informed on current WNV activity in Halton Region, visit halton.ca/wnv. For information on laboratory testing of suspected human cases, please visit halton.ca/physicians.



Animal exposure incident reporting on weekends and holidays

To ensure your patients receive rabies prophylaxis quickly (if needed) and limit response delays during weekends and holidays, please report all animal exposure incidents (e.g., bites or scratches) to the Health Department by dialing 311 first and then faxing bite/scratch exposure reports to 905-825-8797. For more information, visit halton.ca/rabies.

Quick facts: In 2015, the Health Department received: 90 ticks for identification, 993 animal bite/scratch exposure reports and 88 requests for rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).

