

HALTON REGION HEALTH DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
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TO: Halton Physicians
Medical Chiefs of Staff: Joseph Brant Hospital, Halton Healthcare (Oakville, Milton and Georgetown Hospitals)
Chairs of: Family Practice, Paediatrics, Internal Medicine, Emergency, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Surgery
Chief of Laboratory Services and Infection Control Practitioners

POST IN: Emergency Department and Physicians Lounge

FROM: Dr. Daniela Kempkens, Associate Medical Officer of Health

DATE: July 19, 2018

RE: West Nile Virus and Lyme Disease

West Nile Virus

Halton Region Health Department's active surveillance for West Nile virus (WNV) in mosquitoes has identified a positive mosquito pool from mosquitoes collected in Burlington this past week. Human WNV cases often follow 0 to 6 weeks after the first positive mosquito pool.

The incubation period for WNV ranges from 2 to 14 days. While most WNV infections are asymptomatic, approximately 20 to 25% of infected individuals develop non-neurological symptoms (West Nile fever) and less than 1% develop neuroinvasive disease. For diagnostic testing, acute and convalescent serology of clotted blood or serum is recommended. For neuroinvasive illness add a cerebrospinal fluid sample for serological testing (WNV IgM). The requisition should indicate "West Nile Virus - Serology" as well as onset date and travel history. For additional lab information see the [WNV Lababstract](#). For current WNV surveillance data in Halton see halton.ca/WNV.

Lyme Disease

Health Department staff also conducts surveillance for ticks and Lyme disease. Ticks removed from a patient can be placed in a screw cap container and submitted to the Halton Region Health Department to be sent for identification and testing. Tick submissions for this year have increased compared to the same time in past years. Since serologic testing in very early Lyme disease is not sensitive, a thorough history of travel and activities that increase potential exposure to ticks is very important for diagnosis. Symptoms can vary from person to person. Early Lyme disease symptoms may include an erythema migrans (EM) rash at the site of the bite 1 to 2 weeks after infection, fatigue, headache, and arthralgia. A Lababstract on Lyme disease is available at publichealthontario.ca/LAB. Public Health Ontario also provides general information on Lyme Disease at publichealthontario.ca. For information and tick submission procedures in Halton Region please see halton.ca/Lyme.

Please report all suspected or confirmed cases of [Diseases of Public Health Significance](#) (formerly Reportable Diseases) to the Halton Region Health Department as soon as possible. Diseases marked * should be reported immediately by telephone (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) or fax (Mon-Fri, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm only). Other diseases can be reported the next working day. Dial 311, 905-825-6000 or toll free at 1-866-442-5866. For general information, please visit halton.ca/physicians. To sign up for important updates by email, visit halton.ca/physicianupdates.

If any link provided in this memo does not work, please cut and paste it into your web browser.

https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/LAB_SD_011_West_Nile_virus_interpreting_serology_results.pdf
https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/ServicesAndTools/LaboratoryServices/Pages/Lyme_Disease_Serology.aspx
<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/BrowseByTopic/InfectiousDiseases/Pages/IDLandingPages/Lyme-Disease.aspx>