

State reports increase in cases of Lyme disease

LEWISBERRY, Pa. (WHTM) – New cases of Lyme disease in Pennsylvania have increased by the thousands over the last two years.

In 2016, the state had 11,443 new reported cases of Lyme disease. It's 2,000 cases more than 2015 and 4,000 more than 2014.

Acting Secretary of Health and Physician General Dr. Rachel Levine shared the numbers at a press conference Thursday at Gifford Pinchot State Park.

According to the Center for Disease Control, Pennsylvania leads the nation in cases of Lyme disease.

“We love leading the nation in public health but we don't want to lead the nation in Lyme,” said Levine.

Doctors are still trying to explain the increase.

“I don't know. Is it that more folks aren't being as proactive to check themselves, you know preventative measures,” said Rebekah Wickenheiser, Physician Assistant at Patient First.

Some of the preventative measures recommended include using insect repellent that contains deet, wearing long sleeve clothing and showering after spending time outdoors.

Wickenheiser says you should also check your pets since they commonly bring ticks indoors.

A bullseye rash is a common symptom of Lyme disease but other symptoms include fever, fatigue and muscle and joint pain.

Anyone with symptoms should seek medical attention immediately. Lyme disease is treatable, especially when caught early.

For more tips on tick prevention from the CDC, [click here](#). To learn how to properly remove a tick, [click here](#). For more information about on the Pennsylvania Lyme Resource Network and meeting times for support groups, [click here](#).