



MSHA's Occupational Illness and Injury Prevention Program Miner's Tip

**SAFETY
IS A
VALUE!**

"Lyme Disease"

Category : All Mines

Mine Type: Disease

Lyme disease is a serious illness caused by the bite of a deer tick infected with a disease-producing bacterium. Ticks are small insects that feed on blood. When the tick bites, it injects the bacterium into your body where it damages organs and joints. The nymph of the tick (the size of a poppy seed) usually spreads the disease. However, adult ticks (the size of a sesame seed) can carry the infection. The bite of a tick is painless and usually not harmful unless the tick is infected.

Miners need to be aware of the symptoms of lyme disease because tall grass and brush often harbors ticks. A rash that looks like a bull's eye, flu-like aches, fatigue, and a low-grade fever is common. Miners with these symptoms should see a physician. If detected early, lyme disease can be successfully cured with antibiotics. If medical treatment is delayed, lyme disease can cause arthritis, heart, neurological, and visual problems, often, many years after the infection.



To protect yourself from lyme disease, use an insect repellent containing 30% N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide (DEET). Be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions. For added protection wear a hat, long-sleeved shirt and long pants tucked into your socks. Ticks are easier to spot on light-colored clothing. At the end of the day, take a shower and pay special attention to your groin, underarms, and head. A fine-toothed comb can remove most ticks that are present in your hair. The scrubbing action and water spray will knock the tick off the body. This may prevent lyme disease because it takes about 24 hours for a tick to attach itself to your skin.

Issued:	12/31/2003
Tag #	AP2002-H012

Remember – Safety is a Value that you can LIVE with!