



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: September 27, 2023
To: Local Educational Agency Leads
Route To: School Nurses, Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Teachers, Science Teachers
From: Jorden Schiff, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner
Division of Teaching and Learning Services

Ticks and Tick-Borne Illness Education

New Jersey is among the leading states in the nation for incidents of tick-borne diseases. In 2021, New Jersey reported the highest number of [Lyme disease cases](#) (3,518) in the United States and nearly 5,900 [cases of Lyme disease](#) were reported in 2022. If not diagnosed and treated early, symptoms of Lyme disease may become more severe and life-altering. New Jersey statute (Title 18A:35-5.1) requires that Lyme disease prevention be included within the public school health curriculum and Governor Phil Murphy recently signed additional legislation ([P.L.2023, c.60](#)) that requires local educational agencies to provide instruction on the prevention of Lyme Disease and other tick-borne diseases in grades kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Instruction about ticks and tick-borne illnesses should emphasize disease prevention and include topics such as the biology of various tick species, tick habitats, diseases transmitted by ticks, recommended attire, and repellants to help protect an individual from ticks, how to perform tick checks, proper techniques for the removal of ticks, and symptoms an individual may experience after receiving a tick bite.

To support educators, the New Jersey Department of Education and the New Jersey Department of Health have collaboratively selected materials to support educators in instruction regarding ticks and tick-borne illnesses. Resources can be found in Appendix A, below.

Contact Information

Questions regarding Tick and Tick-Borne Illness Education should be directed to standards@doe.nj.gov.

c: Members, State Board of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group

Appendix A:

Example Instructional Materials

[School-Based Tick-Borne Disease Education Toolkit](#) (PDF), (2020) New Jersey Department of Health and Communicable Disease Service

[Tick-Borne Diseases](#) (PDF), (2017), New Jersey Department of Health and Communicable Disease Service

[Fight the Bite, NJ!](#), (n.d.), New Jersey Department of Health and Communicable Disease Service

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) offers free tick and tickborne disease resources:

- Don't Let a Tick Make You Sick! [PDF – 1 page] – Printable Tick Bite Prevention Comic for Summer Campers
- It's Open Season on Ticks! [PDF – 2 pages] – Printable Hunter Safety Fact Sheet
- Don't Let a Tick Make You Sick! [PDF- 2 pages] – Printable Tick Bite Prevention Crossword Puzzle and Information Sheet for Kids
- Prevent Tick Bites [PDF- 1 page] – Tick Bite Prevention Trail Sign
- Order [prevention bookmarks](#) in English or Spanish
- Radio PSA for Healthcare Providers: Preventing Tick Bites and Tickborne Diseases [mp3 – 160sec]

Professional Learning Resources

The [New Jersey Department of Health Communicable Disease Service](#) website provides information on tick-borne diseases and conditions, tick-borne diseases and conditions in New Jersey.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [Tickborne Diseases of the United States](#) website has a wide array of resources to help educators better understand tick identification, an overview of tickborne diseases, and Lyme disease.