



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

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17<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Deputy Mary Lou McDonald  
TD  
Dail Eireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**PQ 11570/20: To ask the Minister for Health if his officials will consider the way in which to raise awareness of Lyme disease with the general public that are now exercising outdoors more frequently during the Covid-19 emergency - Mary Lou McDonald.**

Dear Deputy McDonald,

The above PQ has been sent to my Department for direct response to you on same.

The following were identified as key elements of strategy for tick and Lyme awareness:

- The general public should have access to simple key health information on ticks, preventing tick attachment and Lyme disease
- This information should have a single source so that the likelihood of mixed messages or inaccurate information is minimised
- The media (including social media) should be used to ensure widespread transmission and penetration of these messages
- Simple messages should be reinforced at regular intervals through the use of social media.
- Media and other events should be intensified at the beginning of each tick biting season to bring the issue to public awareness.

Although cases of Lyme borreliosis are reported throughout the year infection is more commonly diagnosed during the summer season, coinciding with tick activity and high levels of outdoor human activity that may result in tick exposure. HPSC has been regularly posting information on Lyme for the general public and healthcare professionals since 2<sup>nd</sup> May as COVID-19 restrictions were being eased.

Information provided by HPSC on [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie) is reviewed and updated on a regular basis. The website covers topics for both healthcare professionals and the general public. The HPSC website provides free

materials for printing including posters and leaflets. Information is targeted for specific risk groups e.g. children.

#### **Information for the general public**

- Lyme Disease: Factsheet for the general public
- Prevent tick bites and Lyme Disease: leaflets and posters
- Laboratory testing for Lyme Disease: Factsheet for the general public

#### **Information for Clinicians and other healthcare professionals**

- Lyme factsheet for health practitioners
- Erythema migrans diagnostic support tool
- Prevention and control of tick-borne disease in Europe
- Case definition for notification of Lyme neuroborreliosis
- Clinical management of Lyme borreliosis consensus statement
- Erythema migrans slide image set
- Results of a laboratory survey on *Borrelia burgdorferi* diagnostic methods in Ireland

In addition, the HPSC website hosts links to useful Lyme borreliosis resources from international public health bodies such as the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), Public Health England (PHE) and the Royal College of General Practitioners.

I trust this information will be of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,



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