LYME 03/29/2017 M. CLARK

Researchers say climate change may be causing deer ticks to become active for a longer portion of the year. With more on why this is a problem for the fight against Lyme disease, here’s Falcon New Service’s Matt Clark.

MP3 R/T: 1:17 O/C: STD

MATTHEW CLARK: EXPERTS SAY PEOPLE NEED TO BE AWARE OF TICKS CARRYING LYME DISEASE EARLIER IN THE YEAR AS THE CLIMATE CONTINUES TO HEAT UP. RESEARCHERS SAY SINCE 2001, THE AMOUNT OF PEOPLE DIAGNOSED WITH LYME HAS DOUBLED. SOME RESEARCHERS SAY THIS MAY BE BECAUSE DEER TICKS HAVE BEEN SEEN ACTIVE AS EARLY AS MARCH AND AS LATE AS DECEMBER. JANET JARNEFELD (JAR-ne-feld) IS A TICK-BORNE DISEASE EXPERT AT THE METROPOLITAN MOSQUITO CONTROL DISTRICT IN THE TWIN CITIES. SHE SAYS THE WARMER WEATHER HAS ALLOWED THE TICKS TO EXPAND THEIR RANGE.

JANET JARNEFELD: “WHAT WE’RE DETERMINING OVER TIME IS THAT THE TICKS THAT CARRY THE LYME DISEASE, OR THE DEER TICK, IS EXPANDING GEOGRAPHICALLY ITS RANGE.”

MATTHEW CLARK: TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM LYME CARRYING TICKS, JARNEFELD SAYS THERE ARE SIMPLE STEPS TO TAKE INCLUDING WEARING LIGHT-COLORED CLOTHING AND TUCKING YOUR PANTS INTO YOUR SOCKS.

MATTHEW CLARK: U-W-R-F ASSOCIATE BIOLOGY PROFESSOR FRED BONILLA (bo-KNEE-ta) SAYS IT’S IMPORTANT FOR PEOPLE TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM LYME DISEASE.

FRED BONILLA: “LIKE ANY DISEASE, IT HAS SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS THAT CAN HAVE CONSEQUENCES.”

MATTHEW CLARK: M-M-C-D HAS BEEN TRACKING DEER TICKS SINCE 1990. FOR THE FALCON NEWS SERVICE, I’M MATTHEW CLARK.

If left untreated, Lyme disease can cause sever joint pain or paralysis of the face muscles.

###