



## MEDIA RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MR# 2022020**

**DATE: 29 April 2022**

**RE: May proclaimed Lyme Disease Awareness Month in Amherst**

**AMHERST, Nova Scotia** – May has been proclaimed Lyme Disease Awareness Month in the Town of Amherst.

“I urge all residents of Amherst to educate themselves about this disease and to learn about Lyme disease prevention,” Mayor David Kogon said on April 29, 2022, as he signed the proclamation on behalf of the Amherst town council.

The proclamation noted Lyme disease is a serious illness caused by the bite of a black-legged tick that is infected with the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi*.



**AMHERST MAYOR DAVID KOGON SIGNS A PROCLAMATION DECLARING MAY TO BE LYME DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH IN THE TOWN OF AMHERST. (TOM McCOAG / TOWN OF AMHERST)**

Donna Lugar, the founder of the N.S. Lyme Support Group and a member of the N.S. Lyme Advocacy Group, welcomed the town's proclamation.

“We appreciate the town's assistance in ensuring residents are aware that the entire province of Nova Scotia is considered at risk for Lyme disease and that disease-





carrying ticks can be found anywhere, including golf courses, yards, parks, on your pets and even in the long grass adjoining many beaches,” Lugar said.

While research by [John Hopkins University](#) indicates western Nova Scotia has one of the highest rates of Lyme disease in North America, Lugar said northern Nova Scotia has the second highest rates of the disease in the province “and is in the top four in Canada.”

“This is even without knowing the actual number of cases,” she added. “The annual reported case numbers are lower than the true numbers of yearly cases as many go undetected and unreported. Unfortunately, we presently do not know how many cases are being missed as two different research documents published in Canada in 2018 and 2019 suggest quite different amounts.

“They did agree, however, that actual annual case numbers are higher.”

Pointing to the Notifiable Diseases in Nova Scotia 2019 Surveillance Report, the last one published, Lugar said 830 confirmed/probable cases were reported in the province.

If you factor in the percentage of missed cases as shown in the documents [Under Detection of Lyme Disease in Canada](#) and [What is the real number of Lyme disease cases in Canada?](#), that number “would be raised significantly,” she added.

Prevention is the key to fighting the disease, Lugar said.

“This includes undertaking daily preventative measures, such as regular tick checks and ensuring the proper removal of any attached ticks,” she said. “The federal government has a good tick removal video that is worth watching before you find a tick - <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/video/lyme-disease-properly-remove-tick.html>.

“Ticks are not going anywhere, so we have to learn to live with them, rather than fear them, as getting outside is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. Make preventative measures part of your regular routine, just as you would sun screen.”





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