

Daily News

Tuesday, June 7, 2022

Health department phone survey is not a scam

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By [The Daily News Staff](#) | on June 07, 2022

Submitted by the Mid-Michigan District Health Department

If you receive a call from someone “on behalf of your local health department,” asking you to take a survey, don’t worry; it’s not a scam.

Randomly selected residents in Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm counties will be asked to participate in a phone survey from Public Sector Consultants, on behalf of the Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD). The calls are currently being made and will wrap up on June 26.

The purpose of this short, 15-minute Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS) is to gather information on human behavior and lifestyle patterns. Completing the survey will give MMDHD valuable information on the health and well-being of our residents, help determine strategies to improve health, and assist in securing funding to implement programs.

Participants will be asked about certain chronic health conditions they may have, their access to healthcare, what type of healthcare coverage they have, and health behaviors like physical activity, diet, and history of smoking. They will also be asked demographic questions like age, race, education, and income.

The surveyor will not ask the person their name, address, health insurance account information, social security number, employment information, or financial account information. While they may ask what type of insurance the person has, they will not ask for specifics, like account numbers.

The calls will be made from Advantage Research Services, a Grand Rapids-based call center. The calls will be placed to landlines and cell phones on weekdays and weekends, no later than 9 p.m.

The BRFS was established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to collect important health-related information, and for many states and communities, the survey is the only available source of timely, accurate data.

Residents with questions regarding the phone survey may contact the MMDHD at (989) 831-3627.

Daily News

Wednesday, June 8, 2022

Defend yourself against ticks this summer

Submitted by the Mid-Michigan
District Health Department

The Mid-Michigan District Health Department is reminding members of the community to keep an eye out for ticks. While ticks are tiny, they can pack quite a punch, especially the blacklegged/deer tick, which can transmit Lyme disease.

Symptoms of Lyme disease include fever, chills, headache, muscle and joint pain, and a bull's-eye rash at the site of the bite. If not properly diagnosed and left untreated, infection can spread to the joints, the heart and the nervous system.

The best defense against Lyme disease is prevention. Try to avoid shady, moist areas in wooded and grassy locations, as these are the preferred hiding spots for ticks. If you do need to venture into these areas, walk on well groomed trails and avoid contact with overgrown grass, brush and leaves.

Other prevention tips include:

- Apply repellent containing DEET or Picaridin to exposed skin, following manufacturer's instructions.
- Spray clothes with permethrin, which kills ticks on contact.
- Wear enclosed shoes, long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt.
- Tuck pants into socks or boots.
- Use tick prevention products on your pets.

After returning from potentially tick-infested areas, check yourself for ticks and shower immediately to wash off and find ticks that may be on you. Ticks can attach to any part of the body, but are commonly found in the hairline, ears, waistline, groin, armpits and sock



The Mid-Michigan District Health Department is reminding members of the community to keep an eye out for ticks. While ticks are tiny, they can pack quite a punch, especially the blacklegged/deer tick, which can transmit Lyme disease. — Submitted photos

line. Be sure to check your pets for ticks as well.

If you find a tick attached to you or your pet, remove it promptly to decrease the chance of infection. Using fine-tipped tweezers, grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible. Slowly and gently pull upward with steady, even pressure. After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the area and your hands with soap and water and apply an antiseptic to the bite wound.

If you experience a fever, rash, or muscle or joint aches within several weeks of removing a tick, be sure to see your doctor. Patients treated with appropriate antibiotics in the early stages of Lyme



disease usually recover quickly.

If you would like help identifying a tick, visit www.mmdhd.org/ticks where you can view photos of ticks commonly found in Michigan. There you will also find instructions on how to submit a tick photo to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services for identification, and a tick bite assessment tool.

Daily News

Friday, June 10, 2022

Avoid mosquitoes and the West Nile Virus

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By [The Daily News Staff](#) | on June 10, 2022

Submitted by the Mid-Michigan District Health Department

Michiganders spend a lot of time outdoors this time of year, enjoying a variety of summer activities, from biking and hiking to barbecuing and relaxing at the beach. We often enjoy these activities with friends and family, but we should be prepared for uninvited guests.... pesky mosquitoes.

While mosquitoes are certainly annoying, it's important to keep in mind that they can also be dangerous. Mosquitoes are known carriers of West Nile Virus (WNV), a disease that is transmitted through the bite of a mosquito that has picked up the virus by feeding on an infected bird.

Most people who contract WNV have no symptoms, but some may become ill three to 15 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Symptoms of West Nile virus can include high fever, confusion, muscle weakness, stiff neck and a severe headache. More serious complications include meningitis (inflammation of the spinal cord and brain linings) and encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). These diseases usually require hospitalization, can be life threatening, and even fatal.

One of the best ways you can protect yourself and your family is to use an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered repellent containing DEET or Picaridin (following manufacturer's directions). Use of repellent is especially important between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active and most likely to bite. Be sure not to use repellent on children under two months old. Instead, dress your child in clothing that covers arms and legs and cover the crib, stroller and baby carrier with mosquito netting.

Additional precautions include:

- Wear a long-sleeved shirt, long pants and socks when heading outside.
- Treat clothing with repellent.
- Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens and repair those with tears or openings.
- Empty water once a week from mosquito breeding sites such as bird baths, buckets, unused wading pools and old tires.

Additional information can be found at www.cdc.gov/westnile. Visit www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases for information about current WNV activity in Michigan, including a summary of where WNV infection has been detected in mosquitoes, animals and people.