

I do not want to alarm anyone, but I think us gardeners need to know that ticks are on the West Island, and they could be the ones that carry Lyme's disease. Last week I had dinner with a friend who recently contracted Lyme's disease from a tick she encountered while gardening at her home in Roxboro.

I knew very little about this because I thought ticks were out in the countryside, not on the Island of Montreal. I was wrong! I thought I would share what I have learned.

In this email I have included my friend's story, and below that is information on how to avoid ticks, plus links for what to do if you encounter them.

### **What happened:**

My friend was wearing loose clothing that buttoned down the front. It seems the tick attached itself to her stomach while she was reaching across some plants. She did not notice it right away, and had no experience with ticks. When she did find it, a day later when she had some swelling, she did not remove it properly. The head stayed in, and this led to infection. It was a few weeks before she could see her family doctor, and unfortunately that doctor had no experience with ticks or Lyme's disease. As her rash worsened and she developed a headache in the lower back of her head, she was sent to a dermatologist who immediately diagnosed the source of the rash as a tick bite, and the other symptoms as Lyme's disease. With antibiotics and other medication she is now fine. The whole ordeal took about 6 weeks.

### **Useful information:**

**Avoiding ticks:** see Prevention and Protection section of the Lyme's disease link below. It is towards the end of that article. I

use PiActive insect repellent to keep mosquitoes away, and it keeps ticks away also. It does not contain DEET and is not stinky or oily like other products. Available at Jean Coutu and Uniprix. I have not seen it recently at Pharmaprix.

L'Equipeur carries a line of clothing "NoFlyZone" that has a repellent treatment in the fabric. Good for at least 70 washes! Not elegant, and a bit hot in warm weather, but it kept mosquitoes and black flies from landing on me in June at Mt Tremblant. I still needed to use PiActive on exposed skin.

**Removing a tick:** <https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/advice-and-prevention/health-and-environment/removing-a-tick-after-a-bite>

**Identify the kind of tick you encountered:**

<https://www.inspq.qc.ca/en/identification-guide-ticks-found-quebec>

**Lyme's disease symptoms:** <https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/lyme-disease>

Hopefully with this information we can protect ourselves and enjoy working in our gardens this year.