



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Susan Serino

## SERINO URGES VIGILANCE IN WAKE OF POWASSAN DEATH

SUSAN SERINO August 1, 2019

| ISSUE: **LYME AND TICK-BORNE DISEASES**

HYDE PARK, NY— Senator Sue Serino today is urging residents to be vigilant in checking themselves for ticks following the untimely passing of an Ulster County resident as the result of Powassan virus, a very rare, but serious tick-borne disease. Serino released the following statement in response to the tragic news:

“While Powassan virus is extremely rare, it is critically important for all New Yorkers to be proactive and take precautions when enjoying the outdoors, especially this time of year. Ticks are out in full force and it is important to always do a tick check on yourself, your loved ones and your pets each time you come inside after spending any amount of time outdoors.

If you know that you have been bitten by a tick, or have been in an area where ticks are present, and you begin to experience flu-like symptoms, headache, vomiting, weakness, confusion, loss of coordination, speech difficulties, or memory problems, you should consult with your physician immediately.

After fighting for years to make combatting Lyme and tick-borne diseases a priority in the eyes of the state, there has been a noticeable backslide in Albany this year, as evidenced by the cut in critically important funding for research, education and prevention. Tick-borne diseases clearly present a very real and persistent threat to public health and safety. Now,

more than ever, we should be doubling down on our efforts to combat these devastating diseases and I will continue to fight to ensure that the state makes this issue a top priority.”

The New York State Department of Health suggests New Yorkers heed the following tips to protect against ticks:

- Wear light-colored clothing with a tight weave to spot ticks easily.
- Wear enclosed shoes, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Tuck pant legs into socks or boots and shirt into pants.
- Check clothes and any exposed skin frequently for ticks while outdoors.
- Consider using insect repellent.
- Stay on cleared, well-traveled trails. Walk in the center of trails. Avoid dense woods and bushy areas.
- Avoid sitting directly on the ground or on stone walls.
- Keep long hair tied back, especially when gardening.
- Bathe or shower as soon as possible after going indoors (preferably within two hours) to wash off and more easily find ticks that may be on you.
- Do a final, full-body tick check at the end of the day (also check children and pets), and remove ticks promptly.

For more tips from the Department of Health, and to learn how to properly remove a tick, [click here](#).