

**GEORGE LATIMER, Westchester County Executive**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## ***WESTCHESTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT SHARES SUMMER CAMP TIPS***

(White Plains, NY) – As families look forward to the start of the summer season, the Westchester County Health Department is sharing tips to help parents plan a safe camp experience for their children.

Westchester County Deputy Commissioner for Environmental Health Chris Ericson said: “When choosing a day camp, Westchester families have so many options. It’s a good idea to ask whether the camp has a valid permit from the Health Department, because we inspect the 235 camps we regulate before and during the season. This sets the camps up for success, and helps to reinforce the rules in place to keep children safe.”

Ericson said parents should provide their child’s camp with accurate emergency contact numbers, their child’s medical history including immunization records, and any special dietary, behavioral or health concerns. Once camp begins, parents should apply sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or more to their child daily, send sunscreen with them to reapply throughout the day, and perform a tick check once their child returns home at the end of the day.

Ericson said: “Check your child’s clothing for ticks. Have them shower soon after they come home. That’s a great time for a tick check and it may help wash off any unattached ticks. Pay close attention to the scalp, ears, under arms, back of the knees, belly button, waist and between the legs. In most cases, a tick must be attached for 36 to 48 hours or more before the Lyme disease bacterium can be transmitted, so daily tick checks and showers can greatly minimize the risks.”

If you do find a tick on your child, don’t panic. Use tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible, but do not squeeze the body of the tick. Pull the tick gently upward. Wash the area with a disinfectant. If the tick’s mouthparts break off, don’t worry. They cannot transmit Lyme disease, because the infected body is no longer attached. They will fall out by themselves, or can be removed like a splinter. Although not routinely

recommended, taking antibiotics within three days after a tick bite maybe beneficial for some, so consult your child's healthcare provider.

Watch the site of a bite for the appearance of a rash three to 30 days after the bite. The rash will usually be at least two inches in diameter initially and will gradually expand. If your child develops this kind of rash or flu-like symptoms, contact your child's physician immediately. For more information, go to [www.westchestergov.com/health](http://www.westchestergov.com/health).

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