

LAPORTE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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For immediate release

The LaPorte County Health Department proudly announces a new service for LaPorte county residents. In honor of continuing to spread information concerning Lyme disease and other tick borne illnesses beyond our Lyme awareness events that we held in May for National Lyme Disease Awareness month, our laboratory technician will now draw blood for serological testing for Lyme disease, its co-infections, and other tick borne illnesses on Fridays ONLY. Please call for an appointment.

Lyme disease is often mis-diagnosed and under treated due to the complicated nature of the borrelia burgdorfi bacteria. This is the bacteria responsible for debilitating and crippling many people without ever getting a proper diagnosis and/or accurate treatment. Often referred to as “The Great Imitator”, due to its ability to imitate many other conditions, illnesses, and diseases, borrelia affects many organs in the body, including brain and nervous system, muscles and joints. Main symptoms, but not even close to all the symptoms of Lyme disease are rash (NOT necessarily a bull’s eye shaped rash) fever, headache, stiff neck and joints, body aches, and fatigue. Symptoms can come and go, and migrate back and forth to different parts of the body.

Tick bite prevention is the best method to avoid a tick borne illness. Wear long pants, long sleeves, long socks, hat, light colored clothing, spray permetherin on clothing, use 20%-30% deet when heading outdoors, avoid wooded grassy areas, check for ticks often, shower thoroughly after being outdoors, learn how to properly remove a tick.

More information can be found at www.lymediseaseassociation.org.

The LaPorte County Health Department will be utilizing Igenex Inc. Reference Laboratories’ test kits. IGeneX, Inc. is a specialty immunology laboratory and research facility, providing personalized service to over 1,000 private practice physicians, hospitals, and other clinical reference laboratories throughout the U.S. and Canada. The laboratory also functions as a pilot site for diagnostic manufacturers in the introduction of new assays, and has extensive collaborative agreements with multiple research groups. www.igenex.com. The blood draw will be free of charge, however the testing is not free. IgeneX offers a variety of testing and the Lyme tests start at \$260 which is due at the time of your appointment. The LPCHD will ship the blood sample to Igenex laboratory for your desired test(s). Charges for the tests will be paid prior to blood draw and can be paid with a credit card, money order or check made out to Igenex. A consultation with a medical doctor is recommended but a doctor’s order for the test is not necessary, The LPCHD’s Health Officer will serve as the ordering physician. Patient is responsible for all charges and for billing their own insurance or Medicaid. Igenex will bill Medicare. Test kits may also be picked up and taken to their family physician free of charge.

Please call Cynthia Ebert, water lab technician, for an appointment at 219-326-6808 ext. 2429.

Mission Statement:

“To engage and partner in a collaborative and responsive effort with the community and local organizations with respect to the diversity of the community to better serve present and future generations.”