

# Lyme disease on the rise in Halton Region

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Bev Aalbers is not at all surprised that 13 people contracted Lyme disease in Halton Region last year. In fact, she thinks that number is probably low.

"The problem is that it's not on the radar," she said, talking about the disease that she contracted six years ago, which almost took her life.

After fighting with doctors for a diagnosis, she finally travelled to New York where she received treatment.

Recent statistics with the Halton Region show that 13 people contracted Lyme disease in the region in 2017, sparking concern among councillors.

"Lyme disease is horrifying and it's coming north," said Burlington Coun. Paul Sharman, remembering the years he spent south of the border.

The topic was brought up at a recent Halton Region council meeting, where commissioner and medical officer Hamidah Meghani told council that the public health department is



Alexandra Heck/Metroland

**A fully engorged tick that Keith Poullos pulled off of his dog, beside a dime for scale.**

continuously monitoring the disease.

"We are not an endemic area," she said, adding that people can submit ticks to the region for sampling to determine whether they carry Lyme disease.

A team from the region is also working with Public Health Ontario to track ticks and Lyme disease with on the ground testing in different areas across Halton.

"There may have to be more education," said Halton Hills

Mayor Rick Bonnette, who remembers a similar conversation with the health department commissioner ten years ago, where he said that Lyme disease was not a serious concern in the

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By Cory Soal  
R.H.A.D.

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