

# RENSSELAER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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## ANAPLASMOSIS ALERT

### To The Residents of Rensselaer County

The Rensselaer County Department of Health is issuing an alert on June 20<sup>th</sup> 2017 about an increase in anaplasmosis cases this year. Anaplasmosis is a bacterial infection caused by the bite of infected ticks. Anaplasmosis can affect people of any age, however the cases tend to cluster in the summer months and disproportionately affect the elderly and immunocompromised. The disease is not spread from person to person. People who spend time outdoors hiking, working, playing, gardening, particularly in grassy and wooded areas are at greatest risk. Symptoms of anaplasmosis include headache, **fever**, chills, muscle aches, and weakness. Some individuals may experience confusion, nausea, vomiting and joint pain. Symptoms appear one to two weeks after the bite of an infected tick. However, not everyone is aware they may have been bitten by a tick. The generalized symptoms can be easily confused with other ailments, and lab tests generally do not show up positive in the first 7-10 days of illness. Unlike other tick-borne diseases like Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, there is very rarely a rash associated with this bacterial infection. However, it is also possible, **though rare**, to contract anaplasmosis through blood transfusion and organ donations much like its fellow tick-borne illness babesiosis. As a result, the best treatment may be prevention. When it comes to ticks, scanning after outdoor activity and proper removal with tweezers or a tick spoon can be effective. If symptoms begin, contact a physician immediately. So far this year, 48 cases of anaplasmosis have been reported in Rensselaer County, an increase from the 25 in 2016.