

## Lyme Disease

By: Melinda Sperl

As a landscaper in Texas I am aware of the critters we face outdoors like snakes, fire ants, fleas and ticks. In the Houston area these are really a yearlong problem for us as we really don't have a cold season to freeze them back. Personally, I had a wakeup call this and want to pass on a special reminder to everyone before you head off for your summer vacation.

Over Memorial Day weekend, while on vacation in Wisconsin, I got bitten by a tick and contracted Lyme disease. While Lyme disease has a higher infection rate in the Northern states it has also been reported in Texas and first exhibits with flu-like symptoms. If left untreated it can develop into more serious conditions.

I would like to remind you all that when you are on vacation, camping, walking or playing in the woods, make sure that you use a protective product like DEET. I had on shorts, flip flops in knee high grass but even then the tick was on my head.

Protect your pets from fleas with products applied to the back of their neck but make sure you read the label to ensure it covers ticks too as not all do. The products sold over the counter are usually not as strong as those sold by your vet.

Happy Gardening!

Melinda Sperl is a Horticulturalist and the owner of Dream Landscape Design, Inc. You can reach Melinda at [Melinda@dreamlandscapedesign.com](mailto:Melinda@dreamlandscapedesign.com) or [www.dreamlandscapedesign.com](http://www.dreamlandscapedesign.com)