

This was sent to The Great Morel via email and is worth reading and taking precautions. (March 2002)

Courtesy of Nancy Bishop - petalz2001@yahoo.com

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Hey, I live in Southern Illinois and am an avid morel hunter. Last year, I started out great. This was the first of April (around Easter). We went camping and I was finding a bunch of the smaller ones. This was on Easter break. We went back the next weekend, and I found many more. This time I sat down in the middle of the woods, to take a break. I was in morel heaven.

I love morel hunting so much, that I have even overcome my fear of snakes. I was scared to death of them. Now, I know what to fear, and that is ticks. When I got out of the shower after camping, we pulled 4 ticks off of me. One was a deer tick embedded. I have never been the same since that last camping trip.

First, I came down with a sore throat. Later on it turned to fatigue and arthritis and stabbing headaches. I am 35 and have never been sick a day in my life. I'm tough!! It progressed to neurological damage. I found an LLMD (lyme literate medical doctor) through lymenet. I have no insurance and have spent thousands on prescription drugs trying to cure this disease. I have maxed out all my charge cards trying to treat it. I don't want anyone to go through what I have been through. This disease is rapidly spreading and it's in almost every state.

If you want to get an idea about this disease, drop in and read some of the posts on lymenet. Testing is not accurate and it is hard to find a specialist. They are far and few between. I have to take one day at a time. But, I will not give up hunting morels. This year, I will be taking precautions while hunting morels. I am using a strong cream to repel ticks on my skin. I'm wearing long sleeves and jungle fatigues. I am wearing a tight fitting hat on my head and long boots.

I will also be spraying my clothing down with permathrin or permamone. This is what the military uses. I am not a nut. I just want people to be informed of what is out there. I am not attributing this disease to mushroom hunting. I know people that have gotten it hunting, fishing, gardening, from ticks on their animals. Believe me, I will be out there with the rest of you. I am going through a living hell right now, and I wouldn't wish it on my worst enemy.

Good luck hunting this year. I'm praying it will be a great year.

Nancy