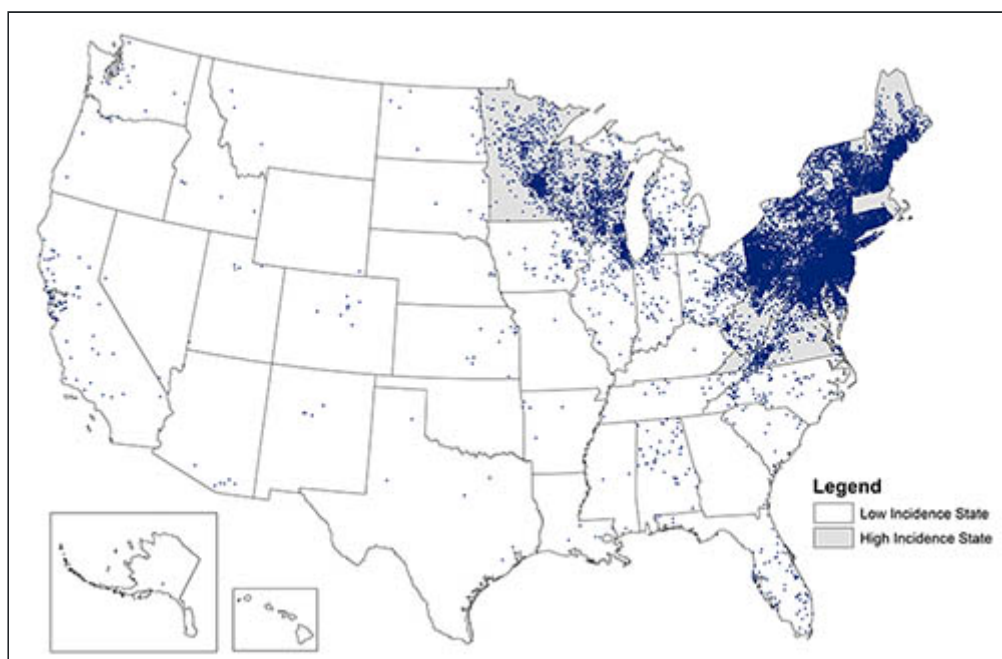


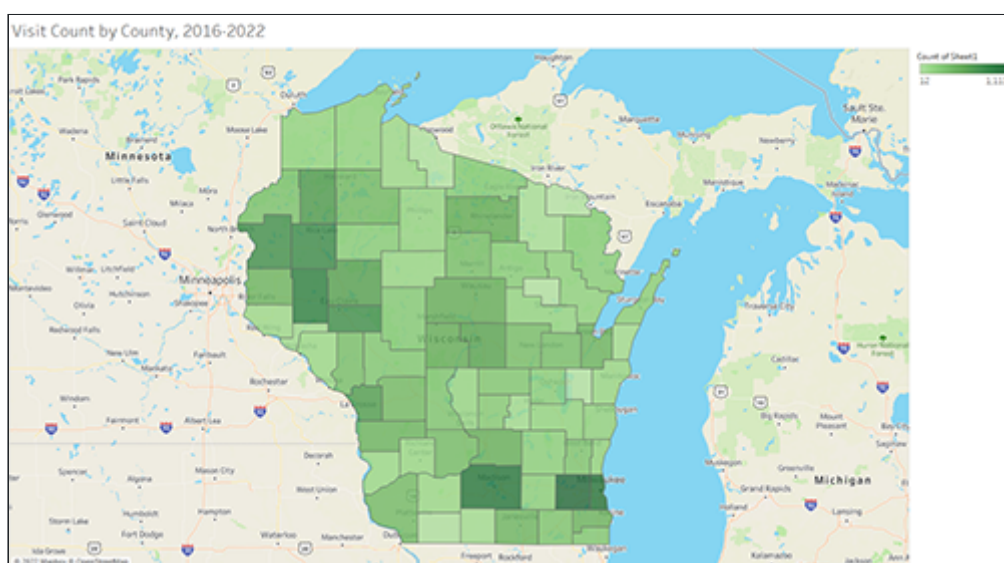
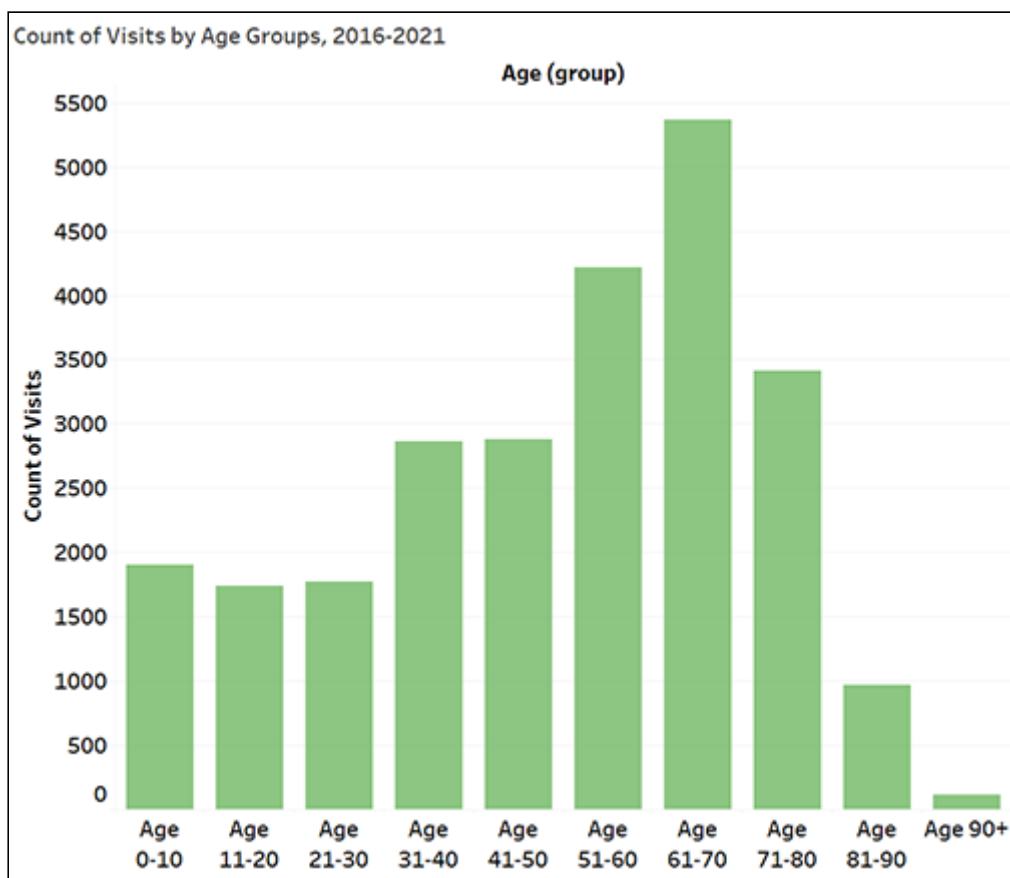
August Fast Facts: Lyme Disease

As summer continues in full swing, it is important to remember that with beautiful Wisconsin outdoors, comes concerns for certain summer illnesses such as Lyme disease. This disease is transmitted to humans through a bite of an infected tick. People most commonly get Lyme disease in three areas: New England and Mid-Atlantic, northern Midwestern states like Wisconsin and Minnesota, and northern West Coast like Oregon and Washington.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that the ticks usually need to be attached for 36 to 48 hours before they transmit Lyme bacteria. The CDC estimated that around 470,000 people are diagnosed with Lyme disease in the United States each year. Some early signs and symptoms of Lyme disease are skin rash, fatigue, chills, headache, and muscle and joint pain. Early Lyme disease is treated with antibiotics and people usually recover rapidly.



The WHA Information Center analyzed Lyme disease claims data from Wisconsin hospitals through the years 2016 to 2021. The count of visits by year and quarter increase for the summer months, but especially in July – September. When looking at gender, it was about even for males and females (51% for males, 49% for females). The average age of patient visiting the hospital for Lyme disease is 50 years old. Breaking the ages into groups shows that age group 61-70 had the highest visit count. The map of visit count by counties show the highest counties being Waukesha and Dane, but there is an interesting cluster of high counts in the northwest area of Wisconsin.



Here are some tips from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on tick bite prevention:

- Use EPA registered insect repellents.
- Wear clothing.
- Wear clothing treated with 0.5% permethrin. Re-treat clothing annually according to label instructions.
- Shower as soon as possible after spending time outdoors.
- Check for ticks daily. Ticks can hide under the armpits, behind the knees, in the hair, and in the groin.
- Tumble clothes in a dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks on dry clothing after you come indoors.

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