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New Study Finds Virus Found in MO May Have Spread

ST. JOSEPH, Mo. (AP) - A doctor says a virus found in Missouri in 2009 appears to be showing up in other states.

Dr. Scott Folk, director of adult infectious diseases at Heartland Clinic in St. Joseph, says the Heartland virus discovered in 2009 was initially thought to be confined to the region.

But he told The St. Joseph News-Press that new research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates the Heartland Virus may extend through more of the nation than initially thought.

He says the new CDC study found Heartland virus antibodies in white-tailed deer, raccoons, moose and coyotes in 13 states, including Florida, Georgia, Maine, Texas and Kansas.

The presence of antibodies indicates the animal has been exposed to the virus, which is believed to be carried by lone star ticks.

Associated Press