

LYME DISEASE FACT SHEET

What is Lyme disease?

Lyme disease is caused by bacteria that is spread from the bite of an infected tick. In the U.S., most cases are found in the northeastern states and the upper Midwest. Untreated Lyme disease can produce a wide range of symptoms, depending on the stage of infection.

What are the symptoms?

Early stage symptoms may include:

- Skin rash or redness on the bite area which may enlarge and look like a bullseye
- Fever and chills
- Stiff neck
- Fatigue

Later stage symptoms may include:

- Additional rashes on other body parts
- Meningitis
- Arthritis of large joints
- Weakness of facial muscles
- Heart palpitations and dizziness

How can it be prevented?

Avoid areas with ticks, such as wooded areas and places with a high deer population, especially in spring and summer. If you cannot avoid these areas:

- Wear long sleeves, long pants, high socks and shoes.
- Wear light colored clothing to be able to spot ticks more easily.
- Apply tick repellent.
- Check your skin for ticks.
- If bitten by a tick, remove it immediately.

How is it spread?

- The type of tick that spreads Lyme disease is the blacklegged tick (sometimes called a deer tick). Blacklegged ticks become infected when they bite an infected animal, such as a deer. The ticks can then spread the disease to humans.
- **In most cases, ticks must be attached for at least 36 hours to cause disease.**
- Most infections occur during the late spring and summer.

How is it treated?

Seek treatment early.

- Antibiotics are not routinely recommended after a tick bite, but because of certain conditions, they may be prescribed. Discuss this with your health care provider.

How to manage tick bites?

- Using tweezers, grip the body firmly and pull straight out of skin. Do **NOT** twist.
- Clean the affected area and hands after removing the tick.
- Place the tick in alcohol then in a sealed bag or container.
- See your healthcare provider if a rash or fever forms weeks after tick removal.

For more information: www.cdc.gov/lyme

For tick identification: www.michigan.gov/mdhhs

This FACT SHEET is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a healthcare provider. For more information call your healthcare provider.

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