



# Lyme Disease

## Lyme Disease Safety Talk

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection spread by **deer ticks and black-legged ticks**. Over 300,000 people are diagnosed with Lyme disease each year in the United States according to the CDC. The areas where these ticks are present as well as Lyme disease has greatly increased over the last few decades. Lyme disease is a real concern for many parts of the United States.

### Lyme Disease Symptoms

(source: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov))

#### Early Signs and Symptoms (3 to 30 days after tick bite)

- Fever, chills, headache, fatigue, muscle and joint aches, and swollen lymph nodes
- Erythema migrans (EM) rashes- Rashes that are located at the bite site and often are a red circle or oval shaped rash that can resemble a bull's eye

#### Later Signs and Symptoms (days to months after tick bite)

- Severe headaches and neck stiffness
- Additional EM rashes on other areas of the body
- Arthritis with severe joint pain and swelling, particularly the knees and other large joints.
- Facial or Bell's palsy (loss of muscle tone or droop on one or both sides of the face)
- Intermittent pain in tendons, muscles, joints, and bones
- Heart palpitations or an irregular heart beat (Lyme carditis)
- Episodes of dizziness or shortness of breath
- Inflammation of the brain and spinal cord
- Shooting pains, numbness, or tingling in the hands or feet
- Problems with short-term memory

#### Tick Bite Prevention



Avoid areas where there is a lot of vegetation or animals that can carry ticks. If you have to be in these areas wear clothes and gloves that cover as much skin as possible. Use bug repellent that protects against ticks. Check for ticks periodically on your clothes and on your skin. Do a complete check of your body before showering. Ticks like to bury themselves in the skin on warmer areas of the body.

### **If You Find a Tick on You**

It is important to remove the tick as quickly as possible. Removing the tick quickly can prevent the spread of disease if the tick is infected. Use fine tip tweezers to remove the tick. Make sure the head of the tick is removed with the body. Save the tick in a zip lock bag or container in case it needs identified later on if disease occurs. Wash the area with soap and water after the tick is removed as well as your hands. Apply antibiotic ointment to the area if the bite becomes irritated.

### **Summary**

It is important to prevent tick bites. Proper prompt removal of any ticks that have bitten you will also protect you from getting infected from the bite. It is important to understand the symptoms of Lyme disease. Often times the disease is not diagnosed properly and this can lead to more serious issues.