

Who is most at risk to contract Lyme disease?

While anyone can contract Lyme disease, it is more commonly a disease of active people, those who use the outdoors as their playground for sports, hobbies and other activities. Children, athletes, hunters and outdoor adventurers are highly susceptible to the disease just by the nature of their activities. Playgrounds, parks, trails, fields and your own backyard are the harborage areas for Lyme carrying ticks. High human rates of Lyme disease are directly linked to large deer, mouse, chipmunk, squirrel and bird populations. Deer primarily serve as transport

hosts by moving infected ticks into areas where people travel and play. Rodents, birds and white-footed mice are reservoir hosts of Lyme disease and actually infect blood-feeding ticks with the Lyme spirochete. Wherever these animals are found, you are likely to find Lyme-infected ticks. As deer and mouse populations go unchecked because of local and state regulations that protect them, the disease spreads at uncontrolled rates. Contact your local and state legislators and tell them to get control of these "out-of-control" animal populations in densely populated human areas. Common sense needs to prevail when it comes to protecting the health and safety of the human population.

What is the most effective preventative control method available today?

An insecticide application to the lawn and wooded transition zones around your home is the most effective method to kill ticks. These applications should be applied by a licensed professional pest control operator with knowledge of tick biology and insecticide treatments. Professional pest control operators understand your concerns about the use of insecticides in areas where children and pets live and play. They use sound judgment and extreme

care in the selection of the right product and treatment for your specific situation.

Lyme carrying ticks are a serious threat to public health, yet many legislators are voting to ban the use of effective pesticides based on unproven claims levied by special interest groups. Tell your state and local legislators that you demand protection for your family against Lyme disease. Effective pesticides along with wildlife management are the only viable weapons for prevention at this time.

Lobby your elected officials to protect our children, pets and people in pursuit of life, fun and adventure from the serious effects of Lyme disease. Remember that Lyme disease was first isolated from children living in Old Lyme, CT, and the disease was misdiagnosed as Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis. Our lawmakers are on the wrong side of this issue.

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Lyme Disease

Consumer Fact Sheet



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What causes Lyme disease and how would I contract it? ?

! Lyme disease is caused by bacteria in the group known as Spirochetes. Spirochetes are corkscrew shaped bacteria that bore into and destroy human tissue and organs including the brain, heart, liver and joint tissue. The Lyme spirochete is called *Borrelia burgdorferi*, and it is transmitted to humans and pets by a bite from the black-legged (deer) tick, *Ixodes scapularis*. After infected ticks bite, Lyme is circulated throughout the body by the bloodstream.

How would I know if a tick bite transmitted Lyme disease? ?

! Sometimes there is a bull's eye rash present soon after the bite; however this is not a reliable indicator of the problem because the rash does not present itself on everyone, or necessarily on a part of the body that is easy to inspect. The discovery of an embedded tick is good reason to have the tick properly identified by a pest management professional, and then seek medical advice if concerns associated with the tick arise. Deer tick range in size from poppy seed to sesame seed, making them very difficult to discover. Thus, many cases of Lyme disease go undetected and untreated until chronic and severe symptoms appear. The symptoms of Lyme illness include headaches, joint pain, fever, chronic fatigue, rash, irregular heartbeat, memory loss, limb weakness or numbness.

What should I do if I find an embedded tick on my body? ?

! The tick must be immediately and carefully removed. A proper removal tool is necessary, usually tweezers (specially designed forceps for proper tick removal are available). Firmly grasp the tick by its mouthparts and remove the tick from the skin by pulling back with enough force to free the mouthparts. **Do not** grasp the tick by its abdomen because pressure will force the tick to regurgitate possible disease microbes into the bloodstream. If you are unable to remove the tick yourself, see a medical professional.

Are there removal methods that I should avoid? ?

! Never use alcohol, lit matches, cigarettes, insecticides, repellants, gasoline, ammonia, or any other solvent or heat source to remove embedded ticks. Any of these methods may cause the tick to regurgitate into the victim's bloodstream, increasing the likelihood of contracting a tick-borne illness.

What happens if I get Lyme disease? ?

! The nature of your illness will depend on the length of time that Lyme disease goes untreated. Additionally, not all people respond the same way to this very complex disease, and ticks can also transmit more than one type of disease with a single bite further complicating a proper diagnosis and treatment.



Lyme disease is similar to human syphilis, only more complex. Left untreated, the disease can cause severe debilitating issues both physically and mentally. This stage

is known as chronic Lyme, and is very difficult to diagnose and treat. Early stages of Lyme disease are usually cured with common antibiotics issued by a physician. However detecting Lyme disease in its early stages is difficult at best, and many physicians and laboratories lack the experience and testing protocols to properly identify this disease.



How do I prevent contact with Lyme disease? ?

! Currently only a few preventative measures exist in the battle against ticks and the diseases they vector. **There are no absolute measures** that will prevent people from getting Lyme disease. The best method is to stay away from areas where ticks are prevalent, however that might include a soccer field, a nature trail or your own backyard, and most people find that restriction to be unacceptable. Lyme disease is an issue for people, pets and livestock in 49 States, and not just a problem of the Northeast. A combination of insecticide use and non-insecticide actions is recommended for maximum control and prevention.

■ Pesticide Applications:

Consult with a professional pest management to help you win back the natural areas around your home. Make sure the professional is well versed on the biology and habits of ticks and the associated pest and wild animals that contribute to the life cycle of Lyme disease. Avoid the temptation to "do-it-yourself". Your best investment in the long run is to hire a professional who can have an immediate impact on any pest situation in or around the home. Many "do-it-yourself" treatments fail and in many cases the materials are incorrectly applied, and therefore wasted.

■ Non-Chemical Methods:

Wear light colored long pants and a long sleeve shirt, socks and shoes that have been treated with an approved tick repellent like DEET or permethrin before entering wooded and brushy areas. Tuck pant legs into the socks for additional protection. Clothing can be treated with an appropriately labeled repellent. Check your body for ticks after spending time outdoors. Check pets for ticks regularly. For the home and property, remove all brush and leaf litter from the foundation, other structures, plant beds and other usable areas of the yard. Move wood piles away from the house. Maintain a well groomed lawn. Treat or remove all weeds from areas where people and pets frequent. Effective tick repellents are available for pets. A Lyme vaccine exists for dogs. There is currently no vaccine for people.