

LYME DISEASE

Lyme Disease Information

Per the New York State Health Department, Lyme disease is a bacterial infection caused by the bite of an infected deer tick. Untreated, the disease can cause a number of health problems. Patients treated with antibiotics in the early stage of the infection usually recover rapidly and completely.

In the United State, infected ticks can be found in the northeast, including New York State; in the upper Midwest; and along the northwest coast. Two common types of ticks are dog ticks and deer ticks. Deer ticks carry Lyme disease.

What are the Symptoms of Lyme Disease?

In 60-80% of cases the first symptom is a rash, know as erythema migrans, that:

Occurs at or near the site of the tick bite

Is a "bulls-eye" circular patch or solid red patch that grows larger

Appears between three days and one month after the tick bite

Has a diameter of two to six inches

Lasts for about three to five weeks

May or may not be warm to the touch

Is usually not painful or itchy

Sometimes multiple rashes appear

Around the time the rash appears, other symptoms, such as joint pain, chills, fever and fatigue can occur, but they may seem too mild to require medical attention. As Lyme disease progresses, severe fatigue, a stiff aching neck, and tingling or numbness in the arms and legs, or facial paralysis can occur.

How is Lyme Disease Diagnosed?

If you think you have Lyme disease, you should see your health care provider immediately. Early diagnosis of Lyme disease should be made on the basis of symptoms and history of possible exposure to ticks. Blood test may give false negative result if performed in the first month after the tick bite.

Where do Deer Ticks Live?

Deer ticks live in shady, moist areas at ground level. They will cling to tall grass, brush and shrubs, usually no more than 18-24 inches off the ground. They also live in lawns and gardens, especially at the edges of woods and around old stone walls.

How can I Protect Myself?

Your best protection is to avoid contact with soil, leaf litter and vegetation. However, if you garden, hike, camp, hunt, work, or otherwise spend time in the outdoors, you can still protect yourself:

Wear light-colored clothing.

Wear enclosed shoes, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt.

Check clothes and any exposed skin frequently for ticks while outdoors.

Consider using insect repellent.

Stay on clear, well-traveled trails. Avoid contacting vegetation.

Avoid sitting directly on the ground or on stone walls.

Keep long hair tied back.

Do a final, full-body tick check at the end of the day.

How do I Remove a Tick?

To remove a tick properly, follow the instructions from the NY State Health Department.

Contact Us

To receive more information, call or visit us at:

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