

LYME DISEASE -- BASIC INFORMATION

Lyme disease (often misspelled as "Lime" or "Lymes") is an inflammatory infection that spreads to humans through tick bites.

Lyme is a borreliosis caused by borrelia bacteria, which commonly infects woodland animals like mice or deer. Ticks pick up the bacteria by biting infected animals, and then pass it on to their human hosts. There are many strains or genospecies of borrelia that cause Lyme disease in humans just as there are many strains of the flu virus that cause flu symptoms in humans, with some strains more virulent than others.

Early treatment of Lyme disease is critical, however Lyme is very difficult to diagnose because symptoms vary from person to person. There are over 100 known symptoms of Lyme disease.

Common symptoms include developing a rash, sometimes shaped like a "bull's eye" mark. Initial flu-like symptoms include fever, headache, nausea, jaw pain, light sensitivity, red eyes, muscle aches and neck stiffness. While some Lyme victims experience immediate symptoms after infection, others may have none for many months.

There are three stages of Lyme and they often follow each other quite rapidly.

Stage 1: Early infection occurs within the first few days after being bitten.

Stage 2: Infection spreads for days to weeks following infection.

Stage 3: Chronic Lyme which occurs days to weeks after infection, if left untreated or not properly treated, can persist for months/years.

Lyme disease is most treatable during Stage 1. As time passes, both treatment and diagnosis become more difficult. Symptoms worsen during each stage of infection, ranging from flu-like symptoms to neurological illnesses, including paralysis. With chronic Lyme disease there is not one system of the body that can be unaffected... this includes various hormone production systems as well.

Canada is home to many species of ticks, but the Ixodes Tick – more often known as the "black-legged" or "deer" tick – is the most common Lyme-carrier.

Protect your family from Lyme. Learn how to identify various tick species and how to properly remove them if bitten.

Even better than tick removal is to AVOID allowing ticks to attach in the first place. Wearing long pants and sleeves and walking with a friend who can keep an eye on your back means that you have time to see the tick and brush it off before it attaches. However, if you find an attached tick, remove the tick as completely and as quickly as possible.

DO NOT try to remove ticks by burning the tick off with a match or cigarette lighter, suffocating the tick with petroleum jelly or hot oil, or gripping the tick with thumb and forefinger and tugging at it.

FOR METHODS TO REMOVE TICKS, AND OTHER IMPORTANT FACTS, visit

canlyme.com