



## Lyme Disease

**Lyme disease** is the most common tick-borne illness in North America. It is transmitted to humans who are bitten by infected deer ticks. The longer an infected tick “feeds” on its victim, the more likely Lyme disease will result. It is safest to monitor your health closely after any tick bite and be alert to signs and symptoms of Lyme disease.

### Symptoms

- **Typically flu-like symptoms are first.** These include fever, headache, joint and muscle pain, fatigue and swollen lymph nodes.
- **Circular, red rash** at the site of the bite. This rash may spread and may have a clear center giving it a **“bull’s eye” appearance**. Rash appears in a few days or weeks after a bite **in many but NOT ALL cases**.
- Later, untreated infection causes other symptoms throughout the body. These include joint pain and arthritis, severe headaches, heart palpitations, facial palsy and memory and concentration problems.
- Not all infected individuals will have all symptoms and many symptoms will come and go.
- **If you suspect Lyme disease, please consult your physician.**

### Treatment

- Most cases are successfully treated with antibiotics, especially if diagnosed early.
- Delayed diagnosis usually means a longer course of treatment.

### Prevention

- Avoid tick-prone areas, especially woody areas, tall grasses and areas with leaf litter.
- Use insect repellent containing **DEET** for skin.
- Use **Permethrin**, another repellent, for clothing (avoid skin contact).
- Wear light colors to see ticks easily. Wear long sleeves, long pants and long socks. Tuck your shirt into your pants and your pants into your socks to keep ticks out.

### Proper Tick Removal

- With tweezers grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible. Gently pull tick straight out.
- Put tick in a sealed container with moist cotton ball. Label with name, address, date. Save the tick because it may have to be tested to see if it carries Lyme disease.
- Wash your hands; disinfect the tweezers and the bite site with an alcohol pad or similar disinfectant.
- Call your doctor to determine if treatment is needed.

Sources [www.lymediseaseassociation.org](http://www.lymediseaseassociation.org), [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), [www.turnthecorner.org](http://www.turnthecorner.org)