Lyme Disease Meeting Kit

What’s At Stake

LYME DISEASE

Lyme disease is caused by the bacterium Borrelia burgdorferi, which are transmitted to humans by the bite of infected deer ticks and black-leg ticks. Lyme disease is associated with a “bull’s-eye” rash and/or lesion called erythema migrants.

LYME DISEASE SYMPTOMS

- Early Signs and Symptoms (3 to 30 days after tick bite).
- Fever, chills, headache, fatigue, muscle and joint aches, and swollen lymph nodes.
- Erythema migrants (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) Lyme disease and tick safety.
- 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.

What’s the Danger

WORKERS AT RISK FOR LYME DISEASE

- Construction
- Landscaping
- Forestry
- Brush clearing
- Land surveying
- Farming
- Railroad work
- Oil field work
- Utility line work
- Park or wildlife management
- Other outdoor work

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

PREVENT INFECTION BY TRAINING WORKERS

- How Lyme disease is spread.
- The risks of exposure and infection.
- The importance of the timely reporting of workplace illnesses and injuries.
- Recommend workers wear light-colored long-sleeved shirts, long pants, socks, and hat when possible.
- If worker uniforms are provided, provide long-sleeved shirts and long pants as options.
- Provide workers with repellents (containing 20% to 30% DEET) to use on their skin and clothing for protection against tick bites.
- Provide workers with insecticides (such as permethrin) to provide greater protection. Permethrin kills ticks and can be used on clothing (but not skin).
- When possible, workers avoid working at sites with woods, bushes, tall grass, and leaf litter.

Take The Following Steps to Reduce Tick Populations

- Remove leaf litter.
- Remove, mow, or cut back tall grass and brush.
- Control rodent and small mammal populations.
- Discourage deer activity.

I**F YOU FIND A TICK ON YOU.** It is important to remove the tick as quickly as possible. 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.

BEST LYME DISEASE PRECAUTIONS

- Find out from your local public health office if there are ticks in your area, especially Ixodes ticks.
- Wear protective clothing to prevent ticks from attaching to your skin. Wear closed toed shoes, long sleeve shirts that fit tightly around the wrist, and long-legged pant tucked into your socks or boots.
- Use insect repellents containing DEET or Icaridin to repel ticks. Apply to both clothes and skin. Always read the label and follow instructions for use.
- If possible, avoid contact with low bushes and long grasses. For example, if hiking or walking, walk in the centre of the trail.
- Wear light coloured clothing to help you to find the ticks more easily.
- Check for ticks on and under clothing, especially after being in areas where ticks may live.
- Inspect your skin daily greatly to reduce the risk of infection as ticks may take several hours to two days to attach to the skin and feed. Check areas including armpits, in and around hair, navel, groin, and behind the ears and knees. Also check children and pets.
- Wash clothes promptly and put them in the dryer with heat to help kill any ticks that may remain.
- Shower or bathe within two hours of being outdoors to wash

away loose ticks.

- Keep the tick for testing by placing it in a small, sealed container or double zip lock bags. Write the date on the container or bag. Bring the tick to your doctor if you experience or if think you might be having symptoms.

FINAL WORD

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.