

Lyme Disease

Frequently Asked Questions



What is Lyme disease?

Lyme disease is an infection that is passed by a bacteria. The bacteria can be spread to humans from the bite of an infected tick.

What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of Lyme disease can include:

- Circular rash
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Chills
- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle and joint pain
- Swollen lymph nodes

How does it spread?

People get Lyme disease after being bitten by an infected blacklegged (deer) tick. Once a tick feeds on an infected animal (usually mice or squirrels), the tick will carry the bacterium for life and it will be able to pass it onto humans through a bite.

Who is at risk of getting Lyme disease?

Ticks that carry the Lyme disease bacterium live in the northeastern United States including Philadelphia. Anyone that goes outside in areas where deer ticks are known to live is at risk. Areas that are bushy with tall grass and wooded are more likely to have high tick populations.

How is it diagnosed and treated?

Lyme disease can be diagnosed through a physical exam and a blood test. Antibiotics are used to treat the disease and can eliminate symptoms and help to get rid of the infection.

What should I do if I think I have it?

If you think you have Lyme disease, you should contact your doctor and discuss your symptoms.

How is Lyme disease prevented?

Avoiding tick bites will prevent Lyme disease. Know these facts about ticks:

- Ticks live in wooded and bushy areas with high grass.
- Ticks are more active during May, June, and July.

If you are in an area where ticks may live, follow this advice:

- Where long sleeves When you are outdoors use insect repellent with 20% - 30% DEET on exposed skin and clothing to prevent tick bites
- Wear long pants, long sleeves, and long socks to keep ticks off your skin
- Wear light-colored clothing to help you see ticks more easily

For more information contact your doctor, refer to <http://www.phila.gov/Health/> or contact the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Division of Disease Control at 215-685-6740.

