2019

Ensuring Adequate Recognition and Care for Lyme Disease

Menna Awadalla
University of Vermont

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/fmclerk
Part of the Medical Education Commons, and the Primary Care Commons

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/fmclerk/503

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Larner College of Medicine at ScholarWorks @ UVM. It has been accepted for inclusion in Family Medicine Clerkship Student Projects by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ UVM. For more information, please contact donna.omalley@uvm.edu.
Ensuring Adequate Recognition and Care for Lyme Disease

Menna Awadalla
Rotation #3: Family Medicine
Site: New Milford, CT
Mentor: Dr. Peter Anderson
Lyme disease is the most commonly reported tick borne illness in the United states.

The increasing population of deer in the northeastern United States has increased the risk of exposure to infected ticks, making Lyme a much more prevalent issue.

Without prompt recognition and treatment, Lyme disease can lead to much more severe complications such as Lyme arthritis, Lyme carditis, Lyme encephalitis, and Bell’s palsy.
Cost considerations

- *Adrion et al.* of Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health demonstrated that:
  - Lyme disease costs the U.S. health care system between $712 million and $1.3 billion a year
  - On average, people with Lyme disease cost the system $2,968 more than matched controls.
“Lyme disease is very common in our area and we have a lot of people coming in for treatment or evaluation of treatment for possible Lyme. Knowledge is power—People need to know what this disease is really like and when to come in!”

-Dr. Peter Anderson, Department of Family Medicine, New Milford CT

“People aren’t aware of the multiple types of illnesses that can be transmitted by ticks in our area. We need to provide clear information about this without confusing people. So many people are afraid of Lyme and we need to help dispel this fear.”

-Barbara Golankiewicz, Department of Family Medicine, New Milford CT
In order to raise awareness and help patients gain understanding of Lyme disease, this project focuses on creating a short poster to be hung in all patient rooms and waiting room as well as a longer, more in depth handout that will be placed in all patient rooms.

The poster and handout method was chosen considering the amount of time patients spend in waiting rooms and patient rooms until their encounter formally begins.
Data & Responses

- “I love the graphics, it gets peoples’ attention and makes them want to read the rest”
- “Concise, specific, without being overbearing”
- “Helpful to those with vague symptoms”
- “Provides awareness regarding Lyme and other tick borne illnesses”
- “Important info especially to people who are new in town”
- “The content about prophylaxis is incredibly valuable”
Evaluation of effectiveness/limitations

- Effectiveness of this project can be evaluated over time by creating short surveys for patients at the end of their visit.
  - These surveys should be administered to all patients regardless of whether or not they are coming in for an evaluation of Lyme
  - The goal of the survey is to assess whether people are actually noticing and reading the posters and whether they found them helpful or not

- Limitations
  - By only having the handouts and posters in the offices we are limiting exposure of this vital information only to patients in the New Milford office
  - Many people choose their phone as entertainment while waiting for the physician, thus, that makes it less likely for those folks to notice the poster
Recommendations for future interventions

- In order to continue to increase exposure and awareness regarding this issue, future projects can:
  - Work to distribute these posters and handouts throughout the community
  - Create short presentations and give them at public libraries, schools, and local community centers in the area (ex: YMCA)


Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. This project is a requirement for the Family Medicine clerkship. It will be stored on the Dana Library ScholarWorks website. Your name will be attached to your interview and you may be cited directly or indirectly in subsequent unpublished or published work. The interviewer affirms that he/she has explained the nature and purpose of this project. The interviewee affirms that he/she has consented to this interview. Consented __X__

Name: Dr. Peter Anderson

Name: Barbara Golankiewicz