

# Lyme Disease: General Information, Prevention, and What to do When Bit by a Tick.

## **General information**

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection, of *Borrelia burgdorferi*. This bacteria is transmitted to humans via the blacklegged deer tick. **Not all tick bites are infectious**, and the blacklegged deer **tick needs to be attached greater than 24 hours to transmit the disease**. Lyme disease is the most common in the northeast and great lakes region. This disease is preventable and treatable if diagnosed early.

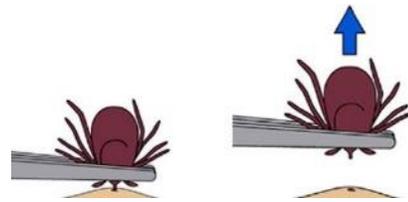
## **Signs and Symptoms**

Early disease (days 3-30 after tick bite): **characteristic bullseye rash, fevers, chills, muscle and joint aches, headache**. Late disease (days to months after tick bite): facial palsy, severe arthritis, heart palpitations, shooting pains and numbness



## **Tick Removal instructions** (per the CDC website)

1. Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.
2. Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk the tick; this can cause the mouth-parts to break off and remain in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth-parts with tweezers. If you are unable to remove the mouth easily with clean tweezers, leave it alone and let the skin heal.
3. After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub, or soap and water.
4. Dispose of a live tick by submersing it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed bag/container, wrapping it tightly in tape, or flushing it down the toilet. Never crush a tick with your fingers.



## **When to seek a healthcare professional**

- Blacklegged deer ticks need to be attached for greater than 24 hours to transmit the disease. **If a tick could have been attached longer than 24 hours consider contacting a healthcare provider especially if you have symptoms.**
- Contact a healthcare provider if you develop symptoms consistent with Lyme disease.

## **Prevention**

- Avoid direct contact with ticks, **stay on center of trail paths, avoid brushy areas**
- Use repellent that contains **at least 20% DEET, picaridin, or IR3535** on exposed skin
  - Follow product instructions
- **Use permethrin** products on clothes
- **Frequently check skin** for tick bites

Information in this handout was gathered from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). For more information on Lyme disease please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/index.html>.

