Do I have Lyme Disease? Symptoms and Latest News

Are you suffering from fever, chills, headaches, fatigue, muscle pain, joint pain, and swollen lymph nodes? Do you have a bull's eye rash? Were you bitten by a tick in the last 30 days? If you live in the Northeast or the upper Midwest, you may have contracted Lyme disease, a bacterial infection that infects up to 300,000 Americans each year.

If left untreated, symptoms can escalate (within days to months) to severe headaches and neck stiffness; a spreading rash; severe joint pain and swelling; facial palsy; irregular heartbeat; dizziness; shortness of breath; nerve, tendon, muscle, joint, and bone pain; inflammation of the brain and spinal cord; numbness or tingling in the hands or feet, and problems with short-term memory.

Where Do You Catch It?

Lyme disease cases are concentrated in 14 states:

- Connecticut
- Delaware
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Minnesota
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New York
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- Vermont
- Virginia
- Wisconsin

The CDC reports 95% of all cases are from these states. However, if you have the symptoms, you should still be tested for the bacteria. There are few states with zero cases.

Related: *How to Cure Lyme Disease, and Virtually Any Other Bacterial Infection, Naturally*

How Do You Catch It?

Lyme disease is caused by the bacterium Borrelia burgdorferi, which is transmitted to humans by a tick bite. According to the CDC, the tick must be attached for 36 to 48 hours or more before the disease is transmitted.

It isn't the adult ticks that are most likely to infect us, it's the nymphs, the tiny (less than 2mm) immature ticks that latch on and stay on long enough to make us sick.

Is it Always a Tick?

There has been some question of whether humans could catch Lyme disease from other bloodsucking insects. The CDC says there is no evidence that mosquitoes, fleas, lice, or other pests transmit the disease. The CDC also states that there is no evidence that Lyme disease is contagious – you cannot catch it from sexual contact, food, air, water, or an infected pet.

Others disagree. The Lyme Disease Association of Australia states,

> *Scientific studies support potential alternate modes of transmission; however these potential transmission sources have not been fully researched."*

The site goes on to post studies of transmission through other blood-sucking insects, such as mosquitoes, flies, fleas, and mites. In addition, they cite anecdotal evidence of sexual transmission and the need for research into transmission

through sexual contact, blood and tissue donation, and through infected pets and livestock.

What New With Lyme?

Not long ago, chronic Lyme was dismissed by the conventional medical profession as being a non-existent. Today, the CDC not only recognizes the existence of chronic Lyme disease, it informs us that the "proper" name is Post-treatment Lyme Disease Syndrome.

The CDC says that most experts attribute the symptoms to residual damage to the body's tissues and immune system, but other experts attribute ongoing symptoms to persistent bacteria that was not killed by the initial treatment and cannot be detected through laboratory testing due to diagnostic limitations and the bacteria's ability to remain in the body undetected.

Conventional Lyme Treatment

It can be difficult to diagnose Lyme disease. False negative tests add to the confusion and poor treatment of this disease. But diagnostics are not the only problem.

According to Lyme Disease.Org, there are two standards of treatment. They state,

> *There is significant controversy in science, medicine, and public policy regarding Lyme disease. Two medical societies hold widely divergent views on the best approach to diagnosing and treating Lyme disease. The conflict makes it difficult for patients to be properly diagnosed and receive treatment."*

And…

> *The ideal antibiotics, route of administration and duration of treatment for persistent Lyme disease are not established. No single antibiotic or combination of antibiotics appears to be capable of completely eradicating the infection, and treatment failures or relapses are reported with all current regimens, although they are less common with early aggressive treatment."*

Unconventional Lyme Treatment

Unconventional treatment of Lyme disease centers first on diet, gut health, and immune system health. Leaky gut needs to be addressed and other infections and parasites need to be identified and treated. There are many supplements and herbs that boost the immune system and fight Lyme disease.

One doctor, Dr. Dietrich Klinghardt MD, Ph.D. also checks for insulin resistance, exposure to mold, and exposure to electromagnetic fields. His patients respond quite well to limitations (or elimination) of the "electrosmog." Cell phones and cordless phones are not used in the home and neither are wireless Internet connections. Some go so far as to paint the outside of their homes with a graphite paint called Y Shield, and they use a special cloth for curtains until recovery from Lyme is complete.

Related: *Earthing – Touching Earth*

Why is Lyme Disease Increasing?

One reason for the increase in cases of Lyme disease may be due to many environmental factors. The air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, the stress we endure, and our constant exposure to chemicals and electromagnetic fields all affect the immune system and our ability to fight disease without the additional aid of pharmaceuticals, herbs, or supplements.

But it’s not just our ability to fight off the disease that is a factor. It is also spreading in the wild.

Ecologists Felicia Keesing and Rick Ostfeld predict 2017 will be a bad year due to a “plague of mice” in the Hudson River Valley. After studying Lyme disease for 20 years, they have found the mice population to be a good predictor of disease activity.

New research suggests the loss of predators such as foxes and martens is a major factor in mice population control. Red foxes and martens feed on small rodents, including the white–footed mice known to carry the Lyme bacteria. In areas with a higher number of these predators (areas where foxes were protected rather than hunted) data shows a huge reduction in the number of infected ticks.

Opossums also help control ticks. Although they do eat mice, their impact is due to their fastidiousness. Like cats, opossums carefully groom themselves, swallowing ticks as they pull them from their fur – an estimated 5,000 ticks per season.

Climate change is also linked to the increase in Lyme disease. Warming climates allow the life cycle of the ticks to speed up, doubling reproduction in the U.S. and increasing reproduction in Canada by two to five times. Both the CDC and the EPA believe climate change is a factor. The EPA has added Lyme disease to its list of climate change indicators.

Some areas that show an increase also have experienced failed farms. Land that was cultivated has reverted to its natural state with trees and brush and an increase in ticks, mice, deer and other animals.

How Do You Test For Lyme Disease?

Lyme disease is difficult to diagnose because it mimics many

auto-immune diseases. Physical symptoms alone will not specify Lyme disease unless the bull's eye rash is present at the site of a tick or bug bite.

The two tests for Lyme disease, the Western blot and the ELISA tests, which may be used together to measure specific antibodies in the blood, are known to result in a false negative result. Dr. Axe recommends direct microscopy in addition to a physical examination.

If you have the symptoms, chances are you will be working with your health care practitioner to find a diagnosis. Make sure you include testing for Lyme disease. And be sure you are tested for parasites and co-infections as well.

From the Editor:

> *I'm not big on diagnosis, or getting tested for Lyme, as both are highly inaccurate. If anyone is feeling a handful of the symptoms below, it's time for a wellness overhaul. Check out* ***How to Cure Lyme Disease, and Virtually Any Other Bacterial Infection, Naturally****. It's not an easy protocol, but it works."*

These are the symptoms that indicate a Lyme disease should be considered:

- Any rash where a tick bite occurred. Although we are told a bull's eye rash in the indicator, 70% develop a very different looking rash as shown in these examples. And not all rashes are limited to the area of the bite.
- Flu-like symptoms
- Fever
- Chills
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Pain in the muscles, joints, and connective tissues
- Swollen lymph nodes

- Trouble sleeping
- Neck pain
- Extreme fatigue
- Nausea and loss of appetite
- Arthritis and swollen joints
- Mood changes
- Cognitive changes, which include brain fog, forgetfulness, headaches, difficulty concentrating

Conclusion

If you live in an area where Lyme disease is common, take extra care when you are out in nature. Long sleeves, long pants, and natural insect repellant will all help, but a thorough inspection of the body is also a good idea. Remember your pets can also pick up these ticks. Natural insect repellents work well for them, too.

Related Reading:

- *How to Detoxify and Heal the Lymphatic System*
- *Detox Cheap and Easy Without Fasting – Recipes Included*
- *Gluten, Candida, Leaky Gut Syndrome, and Autoimmune Diseases*
- *Hypothyroidism – Natural Remedies, Causes, and How To Heal the Thyroid*
- *How to Detoxify From Chemotherapy and Repair the Body*
- *How To Detoxify and Heal From Vaccinations – For Adults and Children*

Sources:

- Lyme Disease – CDC
- *Lyme Disease Transmission* – Lyme Disease Association of Australia
- Lyme Disease Association, Inc.
- *Why Is Lyme Disease Not Just Tick-Borne Anymore?* – Care 2

- *Lyme Disease Treatment* – Lyme Disease.org
- *Chronic (Persistent) Lyme Disease* – Healthline
- *Forbidding Forecast For Lyme Disease In The Northeast* – Goats and Soda
- *Fewer foxes could mean an uptick in Lyme disease* – Treehugger
- *Opossums – killers of ticks – Cary Institute of Ecosystems Studies*
- *Lyme Disease Is Spreading, Government Research Finds* – NBC News
- *Has Climate Change Made Lyme Disease Worse?* – Scientific American
- *Lyme Disease Treatment (Natural vs. Conventional) + Prevention Tips* –Dr. Axe