

WHAT IS LYME DISEASE?

- Lyme disease is a tick-borne illness that is transmitted by ticks in their saliva when they bite humans or animals.
- The most common tick in the Northeast to carry Lyme Disease is the blacklegged tick, commonly known as the deer tick.
- It is common to get this disease by being bitten by nymphs, or baby ticks, which are about the size of a poppy seed! That is because they are so small that they are harder to detect than adult ticks.



THE SECOND TICK FROM THE RIGHT IS A BLACKLEGGED TICK NYMPH

AM I AT RISK IN MASSACHUSETTS?

Yes. Deer ticks are active in Massachusetts most parts of the year, mainly in the summer and fall.



A BLACKLEGGED DEER TICK, THE MOST COMMON TICK IN THE NORTHEAST TO CARRY LYME DISEASE.

LYME DISEASE

How to Protect Yourself from Lyme Disease and Other Associated Tick-Borne Illnesses, Such as Human Granulocytic Anaplasmosis (formerly known as Ehrlichiosis), Babesiosis & Powassan

WHAT ARE THE EARLY SIGNS OF LYME DISEASE?

Skin: a circular, expanding rash with a target-like appearance, like a bullseye. There may also be some crusting, swelling, or raised bump at the center of the redness.



Always a Bullseye?

THINK AGAIN!

Understanding Lyme Disease Rashes

Systemic: Fever, fatigue, chills.

Body/Muscular: Neck stiffness, muscle aches and/or muscle weakness.

WHAT IF I THINK I MIGHT HAVE LYME DISEASE?

Do not panic! Lyme disease is a treatable disease and can be treated with antibiotics. However, **the sooner treatment begins, the better!** **Make an appointment to see your doctor as soon as possible.**

*Pregnant people and children under the age of 8 years are also able to be treated with antibiotics for Lyme Disease. *

HOW WILL THE DOCTORS KNOW THAT I HAVE LYME DISEASE?

-Your doctor may diagnose you based on your symptoms as well as if you believe you may have been bitten by a tick.

-There is a blood test that also can be done called Enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) that can be used to confirm an infection.

TREAT CLOTHING WITH PERMETHRIN



MAKE SURE YOU ARE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS ON YOUR BOTTLE OF PERMETHRIN AND APPLYING IN AN OUTDOOR OR WELL-VENTILATED SPACE



OFF! DEEP WOODS IS AN INSECT REPELLENT CONTAINING 25% DEET AND IS AVAILABLE AT MOST PHARMACIES AND HARDWARE STORES.

HOW DO I STAY SAFE?

Before You Leave: When preparing for activities that may take place in either wooded or tall grassed areas, make sure you are dressing appropriately to prevent ticks from being able to make contact with your skin.

*Treat clothes with **permethrin**, which repels ticks and can keep them from latching on to your clothes. This may take some planning ahead, but the effects will **last for up to 3-4 weeks**.

*Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts whenever possible. Pant legs can be tucked in to socks as well.

*Socks that come up over the ankles and sneakers or hiking boots instead of sandals are recommended for your feet.

*Insect repellent containing **20% or higher concentration of DEET** can be used for additional protection, especially if you have not treated your clothes with permethrin.

When You Get Back: Upon returning home after your activity, make sure you make sure there are no unintended passengers, such as ticks, stuck to your clothing or skin!

***Remove clothing immediately upon returning home**, either in a mud room or different part of your house. This can keep ticks from getting on to your other family members and pets!

*To kill any ticks that may be on clothing, you can put them in the **dryer for 10-15 minutes** or wash dirty clothing in **hot water**. The water must be **hot** to kill the ticks. If you are going to a laundromat, place clothes in a tied plastic bag until they can be washed.

***Check every part of your body** for ticks, paying special attention to creases and joints, like behind the knees or behind your ears. Ticks prefer warm and dark places to hide.

***Take a shower!** What better way to relax after a long hike? It is also a great way to wash ticks off!

Check your pets: When you are giving your furry family members their daily pets, make sure you check them for ticks as well. Ticks may crawl off of pets and onto your human family members.

References

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