



FACT SHEET

Lyme Disease

What is Lyme Disease?

- Lyme Disease is caused by a bacterium called *Borrelia burgdoferi*, which is transmitted by the bites of infected ticks.

What are the symptoms?

- The first symptom is usually an expanding red rash which starts at the site of the tick bite, a few days to a few weeks after the tick bite.
- Fever, headache, muscle aches and joint pain may also occur.
- Untreated, later symptoms can include recurring rash, joint pain, heart disease and nervous system disorders.

Diagnosis and treatment

- Lyme disease is diagnosed through a physical examination done by a health care provider. The available blood test for antibodies to Lyme Disease is used only as supporting evidence.
- Treatment with oral antibiotics during the early stages reduces the likelihood of later symptoms.
- Alternative or experimental treatment is NOT recommended. Taking antibiotics for every tick bite has not been beneficial, and is not recommended.

Prevention

- When working or hiking in areas with ticks, wear light colored long-sleeved shirts, long pants tucked into socks, and closed shoes (not sandals).
- Use tick repellent spray on clothing.
- After outdoor activities, wash clothing and check each person's body, including hair for ticks.
- Pets can also get Lyme disease, so check them also.
- A tick can be removed by grasping its head with thin tipped tweezers and pulling straight out without jerking or twisting.
- Prompt removal of ticks can prevent disease transmission, because there is evidence that ticks must be attached for 24 hours for transmission to occur.

Report all cases to El Paso Department of Public Health by calling 915-771-5810

