



Central Michigan District Health Department
“Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities”

For more information, call your local CMDHD branch office:

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www.cmdhd.org

Lyme Disease

What is Lyme Disease?

Lyme disease results from the bite of a deer tick that is infected with the bacteria *Borrelia burgdorferi*. Because the ticks are very small, a person may not know he/she is infected until symptoms or complications develop.

What are the signs and symptoms of Lyme Disease?

- * headache
- * red circular rash with a clear center
- * chills
- * aching joints and muscles
- * fever
- * fatigue
- * swollen lymph nodes
- * stiff neck

Over time, the disease can affect various body systems causing symptoms ranging from mild to severe. Usually a rash develops that often has a ring-shaped appearance similar to a bulls-eye, usually at the site of the bite.

If diagnosed and treated early, Lyme disease is treatable. If left undetected and untreated, severe nervous system and heart complications and severe arthritis may develop and persist for several years.

What should I do if I have these symptoms?

If you develop these symptoms and have been in a place where ticks are found (wooded areas, swamps or tall grassy area) or around an animal that has been in those areas, talk with your doctor. Your doctor can then make a diagnosis based on your signs, symptoms and lab tests.

What is the treatment for Lyme Disease?

Early diagnosis and antibiotic treatment can cure the infection and prevent later complications. Later stage treatment may require a more lengthy antibiotic treatment.

How can I prevent Lyme Disease?

- Keep your skin covered in areas where ticks are found.
- Wear long pants tucked into your boots or socks.
- Wear light colored clothing. This makes it easier to detect a tick.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts buttoned at the cuff.
- Apply insect and tick repellent to exposed skin and clothing.
- Walk in the center of trails and avoid rubbing against vegetation.
- Keep grass mowed and weeds trimmed around your house. This makes a less attractive area for ticks.