

TREATMENT

Most people who are treated with antibiotics early recover quickly. Common antibiotics for Lyme disease include doxycycline, amoxicillin or cefuroxime axetil.

HOW TO PREVENT TICK BITES

- ◆ Use EPA-approved insect repellents with DEET or other effective ingredients.
- ◆ Wear clothes treated with permethrin and check yourself for ticks after being outside.
- ◆ Shower soon after spending time outdoors.
- ◆ Dry clothes on high heat for 10 minutes to kill any ticks.

PREVENTING TICK BITES FOR PETS

Talk to your vet about tick prevention for dogs, including vaccines and treatments. Check your pets daily for ticks and remove them right away.

CONTROLLING TICKS IN YOUR YARD

You can reduce ticks by keeping your yard tidy. Remove leaf litter, tall grass and brush. Create dry barriers with wood chips or gravel to keep ticks away from play areas.

POST-EXPOSURE ANTIBIOTICS

The CDC generally doesn't recommend taking antibiotics after a tick bite to prevent Lyme disease. However, in some cases, one dose of doxycycline may help reduce the risk if you were bitten in a high-risk area.



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LYME DISEASE



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WHAT IS LYME DISEASE?

Lyme disease is an illness caused by tiny germs called bacteria. The main one is called *Borrelia burgdorferi*, and sometimes another one called *Borrelia mayonii*. These bacteria spread to people through bites from infected blacklegged ticks.

HOW DO TICKS SPREAD LYME DISEASE?

Ticks must be attached for more than 24 hours to pass the bacteria to a person. Most Lyme disease cases come from bites by young ticks called nymphs, which are very small (less than 2 mm) and hard to see. Nymphs usually bite in the spring and summer. Adult ticks, which are larger and easier to spot, can also spread the disease and are most active in the fall.

You cannot catch Lyme disease from another person through touch, kissing or sex. If a pregnant person has Lyme disease, there is a rare chance the bacteria could affect the baby. However, proper treatment helps prevent problems. There is no evidence that Lyme disease spreads through breast milk or blood transfusions.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Recognizing Lyme disease early is important, as it can prevent more severe health issues. If you see a growing rash or feel unwell, tell a doctor. Early signs of Lyme disease can include:

- ◆ A red or purple skin rash called erythema migrans
- ◆ Feeling tired
- ◆ Chills and fever
- ◆ Headaches
- ◆ Muscle and joint pain
- ◆ Swollen lymph nodes

The rash usually appears 3-30 days after a tick bite. It starts at the bite site and gets bigger, sometimes looking like a “bull’s-eye.” This rash happens in over 70% of Lyme disease cases.

Not all rashes from tick bites mean Lyme disease. Sometimes, people can have allergic reactions to tick bites that look similar but are different.

MORE SERIOUS LYME DISEASE SYMPTOMS

Some signs might not show up until weeks or months after being bitten:

- ◆ Severe joint pain and swelling, often in the knees.
- ◆ Nervous system problems like numbness or facial paralysis.
- ◆ Rarely, issues with heart rhythms.

For some people, symptoms like fatigue and body aches may last even after treatment.

CAN YOU GET LYME DISEASE AGAIN?

If you get bitten by another infected tick, you can catch Lyme disease again, so it’s important to protect yourself from ticks.

HOW IS LYME DISEASE DIAGNOSED?

Doctors look for:

- ◆ Whether you’ve been in areas with infected ticks.
- ◆ Symptoms like the rash or joint pain.
- ◆ Other illnesses that could cause similar symptoms.
- ◆ Test results, noting that it can take weeks for certain tests to show Lyme disease.

The CDC recommends using approved tests for Lyme disease, which check for antibodies. These can take a few weeks to appear, so early treatment is important even if tests are negative.

