

Lyme Disease: Prevention

Lyme disease is a common tick-borne illness, the disease is transmitted by the bite of an infected tick. A tick is an 8-legged bug, it spreads disease by passing along bacteria and viruses. The signs and symptoms of Lyme disease appear in stages, and the symptoms usually vary.

Early symptoms of Lyme disease

- Small, red bump, similar to the bump of a mosquito bite at the site of the tick bite
- A rash can appear 3-30 days after the infected tick bite. The rash appears to be an expanding red area that has a clear center, it can spread to about 12 inches. Might feel warm to touch
- Fever, chills, body aches, feeling tired, headache, neck stiffness

Later symptoms of Lyme disease

- The rash may spread to other areas of the body
- Severe joint pain and swelling on the knees
- Neurological problems such as impaired muscle movement, numbness, or weakness in limbs

Lyme disease can be prevented by taking precaution in tick-infested areas. Tick exposure can occur all year around, but ticks are most active during the warmer months. Ticks live in grassy, bushy, or wooded areas, therefore, spending time outside, camping, gardening, hiking, can all bring you in close contact with ticks.

The best way to prevent Lyme disease is by taking precaution when in an area where there might be a risk of ticks, you can decrease your risk of getting Lyme disease with these simple precautions

- 1) Ticks can easily attach to our bare skin. Wear long-sleeved shirts, pants, socks, a hat, and gloves.
- 2) Avoid walking through long bushes and long grass
- 3) Apply insect repellent that includes protects against ticks on your skin
- 4) If you have spent time in an area that has a potential risk of ticks, ensure that you check your clothing, yourself, your children, and your pets before returning home
- 5) Showering after spending time outdoors may also help remove any unattached ticks