

What should I do if I suspect Lyme Disease?

Lyme Disease is easiest to treat in the early stages, so it's crucial to seek immediate attention if you suspect you may be infected.

If you're suffering a variety of symptoms and your doctor is having trouble determining a diagnosis, consider being tested for Lyme Disease. Lyme is often overlooked because there are so many symptoms – patients can be misdiagnosed and treated for a variety of other very serious illnesses like: MS, Chronic Fatigue/fibromyalgia, Arthritis, Crohn's disease, Alzheimer's, Lupus or psychiatric disorders.

Ask yourself...

- Do you feel more tired than usual?
- Are your muscles cramping and sore?
- Are you sensitive to light?
- Do you have a weird rash on your body that may look like a "bull's-eye" mark?

If so, you're exhibiting some of the most common symptoms of Lyme Disease. Don't wait for your symptoms to get worse. Complete the detailed Lyme questionnaire on our website and share the information with your doctor immediately.

How can I find out more?

Lyme Disease is a serious threat that is on the rise in Canada, yet treatment and public awareness are largely inadequate. The Canadian Lyme Disease Foundation (CanLyme) is dedicated to raising awareness and promoting Lyme research, education and treatment.

We encourage the public, the medical community, legislators and the media to use our comprehensive website to learn more about Lyme Disease in Canada.

www.CanLyme.org

2495 Reece Road, Westbank
BC, Canada V4T 1N1

t. 250 768 0978
f. 250 768 0946
jimwilson@telus.net

A walk in the park should not be a debilitating activity



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Lyme Disease is a serious threat

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What is Lyme Disease?

Lyme Disease is an inflammatory infection that spreads to humans through tick bites. Lyme Disease is a borreliosis caused by various strains of *Borrelia* bacteria, which commonly infect woodland mice, birds and other animals. Ticks pick up the bacterium by feeding on infected animals and then pass it on to their next host, including humans.

Three stages of Lyme

Stage 1: Early infection (first few days after infection)

Stage 2: Infection spreads (weeks following infection)

Stage 3: Late-stage Lyme (left untreated, or improperly treated, for months/years after infection)

Lyme Disease is most treatable during Stage 1. Symptoms worsen during each stage of infection, ranging from flu-like symptoms to neurological ones, including paralysis and other debilities.

Who can contract Lyme Disease?

Whilst Lyme Disease is more common in rural areas, those who live in urban areas are also at risk for infection. Although the prevalence varies from one region to another, Lyme Disease occurs throughout Canada.

Though in many regions you're most likely to contract Lyme Disease from May through September, it's possible to be infected year-round – especially if you live in a high-risk area.

How can I prevent Lyme Disease?

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid tick-infested areas whenever possible, particularly in spring and early summer, when nymphal ticks are looking for a blood meal. Adult ticks are a bigger threat in fall. Ticks favour moist, shaded environments, especially leafy wooded areas and overgrown grassy habitats.

How do I know if someone might have Lyme Disease?

Lyme Disease symptoms can appear quickly or gradually over time and they are incredibly varied. The first clinical signs of Lyme infection are often flu-like symptoms – sore throat, headaches, congestion, stiffness, etc. – so many people, including doctors, dismiss the symptoms as the flu.

During its nymphal stage, a tick is only about the size of a period on a sentence. Many people are infected by nymphal ticks but don't suspect Lyme Disease because they don't recall being bitten. In fact, 50% of people infected don't remember being bitten.

Top 5 Symptoms of Stage 1 Lyme Disease

1. Flu-like symptoms often outside of flu season: fatigue, fever, aching, etc., that may or may not involve a rash.
2. Stiffness, migratory joint pain with possible swelling, sore neck.
3. Noticeable fatigue, malaise.
4. Light headedness, dizzy spells.
5. A distinct "Bull's eye" shaped rash can occur in a minority of cases and should raise an alarm if it occurs.

For a complete list of symptoms, visit:

www.CanLyme.com/lyme-basics/symptoms

Top 5 Tick Habitat Precautions

1. **Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts. Tuck your pants into your socks to prevent ticks from getting inside your clothing.**
2. **Check your clothes for ticks often. Ticks will climb upwards until they find an area of exposed skin. Many people do not get a rash.**
3. **Wear light coloured clothing to make it easier to spot ticks.**
4. **Walk on pathways or trails when possible and avoid low-lying brush or long grass.**
5. **Apply insect repellent (containing at least 20% DEET) to your skin and clothing.**