

Lyme Disease: Prevention



Lyme disease is a common tick-borne illness, transmitted by the bite of an infected tick. A tick, an 8-legged bug, 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 as an expanding red area with a clear center and can spread to about 12 inches. It 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 in the knees
- Neurological problems such as impaired muscle movement, numbness, or weakness in limbs

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

The best way to prevent Lyme disease is by taking precautions when in tick-risk areas:

1. Ticks can easily attach to bare skin. Wear long-sleeved shirts, pants, socks, a hat, and gloves.
2. Avoid walking through bushes and long grass.
3. Apply insect repellent that protects against ticks to exposed skin.
4. After spending time in tick-prone areas, check clothing, yourself, children, and pets before returning home.
5. Showering after outdoor activities may help remove any unattached ticks.



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