LYME DISEASE Fact Sheet

What is lyme disease?
Lyme disease is a preventable tickborne disease that is caused by bacteria called Borrelia burgdoferi.

Who can get lyme disease?
Anyone. People who spend time outdoors in areas where lyme disease is found are at high risk for infection.

How do people get lyme disease?
People can get infected with the bacteria from ticks in several ways:
- By the bite of an infected tick (the most common way)
- May be transmitted through pregnancy

Where is lyme disease found the United States?
Tickborne babesiosis is most common in particular regions:
- The Northeast (New England, New York, and New Jersey)
- The upper Midwest (Wisconsin and Minnesota)
- The West Coast (Northern California, Oregon, Washington)

What are the symptoms and signs of lyme disease?
- Most people notice a rash, normally in a round or oval shape called Erythema migrans.
- Some people may get sick from the infection and may have:
  - Flu-like symptoms, such as fever, chills, headache, or fatigue
  - Muscle and joint pain
- If you are diagnosed in the late stages of lyme disease, some of the symptoms can be more severe or different.

What should I do if I think I might have lyme disease?
If you think you might have lyme disease, you should see your healthcare provider.

How is lyme disease diagnosed and treated?
Lyme disease is diagnosed by examining blood for the bacteria. Effective antibiotic treatments are available. See your healthcare provider.

What can I do to prevent lyme disease?
The best way to prevent lyme disease is by avoiding areas where ticks are found. If you live in or visit areas inhabited by ticks:
- Walk on cleared trails; avoid areas with overgrown grasses or brush.
- Wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and socks when outdoors. Tuck the pant legs into the socks.
- Apply repellents to skin and clothing. Follow the instructions on the product label.
- Shower soon after being outdoors.
- Check your entire body for ticks after being outdoors. If you find an attached tick, remove it as soon as possible.
- If you do find a tick attached to your skin, remove it as soon as possible with proper techniques.

For more information, please contact the Cleveland Department of Public Health’s Office of Communicable Disease Surveillance and Epidemiology at 216-664-3747.