



# LYME DISEASE FACT SHEET

## WHAT IS LYME DISEASE?

Lyme disease is caused by bacteria called *Borrelia burgdorferi* and is transmitted to humans through the bite of infected blacklegged ticks. The blacklegged tick (or deer tick) spreads the disease in the northeastern, mid-Atlantic, and north-central United States, and the western blacklegged tick spreads the disease on the Pacific Coast. These ticks are usually found in wooded areas

## HOW DO YOU GET LYME DISEASE?

Through the bite of an infected blacklegged tick. In general, ticks need to be attached for 36 to 48 hours before they can transmit Lyme disease bacteria.

Less commonly, you can get infected by getting a blood transfusion from an infected blood donor. Cases of congenital transmission (from an infected mother to her baby) are rare but have been reported.

## SYMPTOMS

Early Lyme Disease	Late Lyme Disease
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skin rash that looks like a bull's eye</li> <li>Fatigue</li> <li>Chills and fever</li> <li>Headache</li> <li>Muscle and joint pain</li> <li>Swollen lymph nodes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arthritis</li> <li>Nervous system symptoms</li> <li>Irregularities of the heart rhythm</li> <li>Problems with memory, concentration, fatigue, headache, and sleep disturbances sometimes persist after treatment</li> </ul>

## TREATMENT

Several antibiotics are effective for treating Lyme disease. Discuss treatment options with your doctor.

## PREVENTION

- During outdoor activities in tick habitats:
- Walk on cleared trails
- Wear long pants and a long-sleeved shirt to minimize the amount of exposed skin
- Wear light colored clothing to make it easier to see and remove ticks

**TREAT** clothing or skin with repellents.

**INSPECT** yourself, clothing and gear for ticks.

**CLEAN** & disinfect any area where a tick was removed.

**KEEP** record of the date the tick was removed.

**SHOWER** as soon as possible after coming indoors.

## DPHD EFFORTS

Reports of suspected and confirmed cases of disease are made to the Delaware Public Health District (DPHD). The DPHD investigates potential sources of illness, conducts surveillance for the spread of disease, and engages in community outreach and education.