

What You Need to Know About Lyme Disease

As a pet owner in the Rochester area

Quick Facts:

- Affects both humans and animals
- Pets most at risk: dogs and horses
- Passed by tick bites
- Can cause serious and recurring health issues
- It's in our area!
LVC has diagnosed local cases in both dogs and horses
- There are steps you can take to help protect your loved ones from infection



Are you doing everything you can to protect your loved ones from Lyme Disease?



Lyme Disease Cause and Transmission

The bacterium that causes Lyme disease – a worm-like, spiral-shaped bacterium called *Borrelia burgdorferi* – is carried and transmitted primarily by the tiny black-legged tick known as the deer tick. Deer ticks are found in forests or grassy, wooded, marshy areas near rivers, lakes or oceans. People or animals may be bitten by deer ticks during outdoor activities such as hiking or camping, or even while spending time in their back yards.



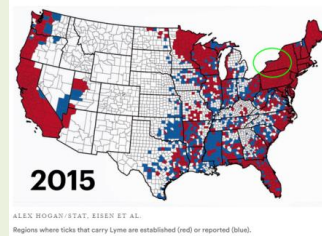
Lyme disease in pets – symptoms

Pets infected with Lyme disease may not show any signs for 2-5 months. After that time, typical symptoms include:

- Fever
- Loss of appetite
- Lameness
- Joint swelling
- Decreased activity
- Neurologic disease

Recurrent lameness also is possible, and the involved extremity may be tender. Inflammation of the joint can last from days to weeks, and may migrate from one extremity to another.

Horses with Lyme disease can develop lameness, joint pain, neurologic disease, eye problems and dermatitis.



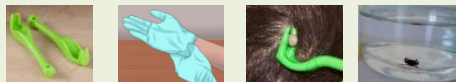
ALEX HOGAN/STAT, EISEN ET AL.
Regions where ticks that carry Lyme are established (red) or reported (blue).

Treatment for Lyme disease

Antibiotics usually provide effective treatment for Lyme disease. However, it's important to follow your veterinarian's advice regarding follow-up care after your pet has been diagnosed with and treated for the disease.

Prevention for People with Pets:

- Use reliable tick-preventive products. Speak with your veterinarian about what tick preventive product is right for your pet.
- Work with your veterinarian to decide whether to vaccinate your dog against Lyme disease.
- Ticks are not jumpers like fleas, they are climbers crawling up on vegetation and wait for prey to brush by. Steps you can take to decrease the chance of tick bites include keeping lawns and pastures mowed and clearing brush around barns and other yard structures
- When possible, avoid areas where ticks might be heavily populated. These include tall grasses, marshes and wooded areas.
- Ticks carrying *Borrelia burgdorferi* generally do not transmit the bacterium during the first 36-48 hours of attachment to a host (though other tick borne diseases may be transmitted sooner). Check for ticks on both yourself and your animals daily and carefully remove them. It is important to remove the entire tick without squeezing its body or leaving mouth parts behind. It's safest to remove ticks with a removal device like a "Tick Twister." The body will fall into the cup of the tool and can be saved in a jar filled with isopropyl alcohol. Wear gloves during tick removal and avoid touching the tick with bare hands. Record the date the tick was removed on the jar and save it for 6 months. Your veterinarian can have the tick tested for Lyme or other tick borne diseases in the event symptoms arise.



- Because people and their pets often spend time in the same environments where Lyme and other disease-transmitting ticks are found, tell your veterinarian if anyone in your family is diagnosed with Lyme disease. Likewise, consult your family physician(s) if your pet is diagnosed.