Lyme Disease
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My Story of Lyme Disease

www.MothersCircle.net
When I was just a little girl, my mom was diagnosed with Lyme disease. At first we didn't know it. On her back was a black thing that wasn’t moving. We thought that it was a mole, but it wasn’t. It was a tick, sucking my moms blood and infecting her with Lyme disease. This didn’t just affect her, it affected my family. We took her to so many doctors, but no one knew what it was. But finally one did. She then she took the Lyme disease test. The results came positive. That’s when we knew my mom had Lyme disease. They quickly put her on antibiotics, but it was too late. My mom had chronic Lyme disease. That meant she has Lyme disease for the rest of her life! So now I decided to learn more about this difficult disease my mom went through.

**LYME DISEASE**

Do you know a disease caused by a tick, with no cure, and you could be diagnosed with this disease today, tomorrow, next week, next month, whenever? Maybe you should by now because this disease is in your location.

This disease is called Lyme disease, if you didn't know that already. This disease is a difficult disease to be diagnosed with since all of its tough symptoms.
Definition

Lyme disease is caused by the bacterium Borrelia Burgdorferi. The bacterium is carried by ticks and is transmitted to humans through a tick bite. This disease is named for the town Lyme, Connecticut. It was in that town that this disease was first discovered in. In 1975, after a series of unexplained cases of arthritis developed. The Lyme disease definition: A vector borne disease, meaning that is carried from one host to another.
Timeline

This is a timeline of the things people did about Lyme disease.
1975-Connecticut Department of Health Services alerted about cases of a new disease involving arthritis like symptoms and erythema migrans rash.
1981-Ixodes scapularis tick found with spirochetes named Borrelia Burgdorferi disease referred to as Lyme Borreliosis.
1982-Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recognizes and defines Lyme disease.
1988-Lyme disease foundation established.
1989-Outer Surface Protein (OspA) discovered and cloned.
1990s-Lyme disease name was commonly used in both popular and scientific presses.
1998- Food and Drug Administration approves Lyme disease vaccine.
2002- Lyme disease vaccine production halted.

The Tests

Even if Lyme disease is suspected in a given patient, the quality of the diagnostic tests can still affect the outcomes. Lyme disease mimics other diseases. When you take the test the tick could be hiding behind your tissues too.

For example, a false negative test could leave a person with the debilitating effects of late Lyme disease for the rest of his or her life.

This is a billboard stating Lyme disease tests could be wrong!
Vaccines

Antibiotics are what most patients use presently. Before, Glaxosmithkline produced a vaccine LYMErix. It did help, but the side effects caused arthritis, also some response was when a body attacks its own tissues, especially in people who carry the HLA4 gene.

I wanted to add this paragraph as my first paragraphs to show people about the tests. I also want to teach others the vaccines, the timeline, and definition of this difficult disease.

**SYMPTOMS**

Now that you know briefly about Lyme disease, its time to know the symptoms of this disease. Lyme disease symptoms are very painful and difficult to go through, but with the right vaccines, and motivation Lyme disease victims can fight through it!

**Days, to Months, to Years**

There are really only three stages of symptoms to this disease. The first stage is days after you have been bitten by a tick and infected with Lyme disease, the second stage can be weeks or even months after the tick bite and the third stage can be months to years after the tick bite. These are the first stage symptoms: Malaise, fatigue, headaches, chills, fever, sore throat, dry cough, neck pain, back pain, swollen lymph, erythema rash, (red bull’s eye rash,) lightheadedness, fainting, muscle aches, feeling itchy, unwell feeling, arthritis, joint pain, tiredness, stiffness, flu feeling, nausea, shooting pains, Bells palsy, dizziness. Those are the symptoms of stage one. Stage two symptoms: Slow heartbeat, joint pain, swelling, meningitis, possible facial paralysis, muscle pain, muscle weakness, palpitations, and weakness in your face. Those
are the stage two symptoms. Now you will hear/read the third stage symptoms. These symptoms are when you have had Lyme disease for a while now and have not been treated with antibiotics. Stage three symptoms: Speech problems, joint pain, muscle pain, muscle weakness, numbness, tingling feeling, heart problems, arthritis, eye infections, mental confusion, heart attacks, disorders of the nervous system, changes in mood, flare ups, and chronic Lyme disease. Those are all of the three stages when you have untreated Lyme disease.

**Pets**

Did you know your dog or cat could have Lyme disease? It is true. Just like you can be diagnosed with Lyme disease so can your dogs or cats. They do have some similar symptoms too. Pet symptoms: Lameness, sudden severe pain, loss of appetite, fever, depression, arthritis, and a dog or cats back leg could collapse. These symptoms do occur. Cats are more prone to Lyme disease since they like to keep clean and usually lick their fur with their scratchy tongue!

Now that you know these symptoms, when you might feel these things, you will be ready and educated to know, you might have Lyme disease. You also will know if your pets might have Lyme disease too.
Ticks are small, smart arachnids who are devious and make life easier for themselves by adapting to their environment.

Stages Of A Ticks Life And Info about Ticks
Ticks are parasites that drink blood from animals and humans. They belong to a group of arachnids. In this group are spiders, and scorpions. Ticks go through three stages in their lifetime, like humans go through when they are bitten by a tick. The first stage is the larvae stage. At this stage they are little baby ticks that are infected by hopping onto a rat or a small rodent. Then they will come to stage two. At stage two, they will become a nymph. This is when ticks are most active and get away with more blood. Then ticks will reach their final destination as an adult tick. They are large and more likely to be noticed as a tick and be
taken off. Ticks do not only carry Lyme disease they also carry Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. There are two kinds of ticks, the soft ticks and the hard ticks. The soft ticks are called Argasidae and the hard ticks are called Ixodidae. Since ticks carry Lyme disease, you might be wondering what helps the ticks immune system since it carries diseases in its body. Well, the ticks immune system produces substance that kills off many of the infections it carries. Ticks love the hot summer weather.

**Location Of Ticks**

Ticks are located mostly in the Northeast and West Coast. Ticks are found in Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Michigan, and mostly Connecticut. Ticks love the hot summer weather, and usually adapt to places with good hiding spots, (like the woods), and usually warm weather. Ticks also live near places with high deer population because deer often serve as hosts for adult ticks who carry Lyme disease. Research has shown a correlation between the number of reported cases. Some states are taking to measure to reduce increasing deer population.
**Bacteria**

Borrelia burgdorferi is the bacterium that causes Lyme disease, and is classified as a spirochete bacterium because of its spiral shape, Borrelia burgdorferi can be seen in an electron micrograph between red blood cells. Flagella is a bacteria usually located on the outside of cells but flagella is located on the inside of the cell Borrelia burgdorferi.

I want to teach others to be careful around ticks, learn about ticks, and learn where ticks are located. I hop from reading this/hearing you will learn these things from this section.

A picture of Borrelia burgdorferi.

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**History**

On a regular day in Lyme Connecticut 1975, kids of all ages were facing arthritis, or even a swollen knee. No one really knew what it was. Amy Wench one day came home with a swollen knee. Her family thought it may have been a bacterial infection in the bone but it wasn’t. It was Lyme disease. Lyme disease is named from the place it all started from, Lyme Connecticut. This disease has a history and the history is a big part of Lyme diseases name. The history of Lyme disease lives on, for now and has made a difficult impact on many peoples lives.

**Where it started**

According to the book Lyme disease by Len Yannelli in the book it informed me that in the 1920s and 1930s there were reports
about an expanding red rash, called erythema migrans (EM) and
descriptions of some other symptoms that would later be
associated with Lyme disease. Also the website Lyme Disease - Gale
mentioned that Lyme disease is named for the town Lyme
Connecticut. It was in Lyme that the disease was first discovered in
1975 after a series of unexplained cases of arthritis
developed. Every book I read about Lyme disease said that this
difficult disease was found in Lyme Connecticut. They also had
additional stories of what the author thought happened. Also
additionally to that site it mentioned that the organism (bacteria)
was named for it’s discoverer, Willy Burgdorferi. So the bacteria of
Lyme disease got it’s bacteria named by its discoverer. Another
story of how Lyme disease started is this one: In 1975, a group of
children living near each other in Lyme Connecticut made
researchers aware that they all had been diagnosed with
rheumatoid arthritis. This unusual grouping of illnesses that
appeared “rheumatoid” eventually led researchers to
identification of the bacterial cause of the childrens condition was
then called “Lyme disease” in 1982 according to MedicineNet -
Health and Medical Information Produced by ...

I want to teach others from this section about the history of
this difficult disease, so if they have it or someone they know or
love have Lyme disease they can know the history of Lyme disease
and maybe get an idea of how they got it and maybe how to
prevent this disease from getting to others.

**PREVENTING**

Preventing ticks is a very serious job
and people should be mindful of the
things people chose to do. That means
being careful outside and what to wear
outside.

**Outside**

According to Lyme disease by Len
Yannelli deer are usual hosts for ticks

This is the woods in the
summertime.
before hopping onto humans. By reducing the number of the deer population was a possible conclusion. So when outside try to prevent going places with high deer population. Also when outside in the woods try to wear, light colored clothing, so a tick can be easily spotted, wearing long sleeves, a hat over hair and ears, pants tucked into socks, shirt tucked into pants, and closed footwear, if possible.

**On Humans**

Lyme disease is a disease not a lot of people are aware about. This disease is a very difficult disease. People go off in the woods unprotected and wonder how they got diagnosed with Lyme disease. Their is a way to prevent this disease by using some techniques.

A chemical like DEET is the popularist to use when outside. This is because DEET is insect repellent, and a tick is considered an insect. This chemical is applied to skin but when applied to skin 20% gets into a humans bloodstream.

**On Pets**

Similar to humans animals such as dogs or cats can have Lyme disease. To prevent this from happening, they can have special medicine rubbed into their fur, also they shouldn’t be able to roam freely near woods during tick season, grooming and going through your pets fur carefully and often, bathing your pet oftenly and vaccines.

**Techniques**

Instead of going outside with a tank top, shorts, and flipflops on, in the woods, their are techniques you can use to prevent ticks. Of course using DEET helps. Also avoiding woody or grassy areas that have a high amount of leaf debris. Also when you get home from being in woody areas, take a hard shower. Then, do a full body check, checking in your hair, behind ears, armpits, behind knees, between toes and in the groin area. Also walking in
the middle of pathways is helpful. Try not to brush past bushes or plants because they may have a tick on that bush or plant. You also shouldn’t roll around in grass, dirt, sand, and leaves. I once jumped in a leaf pile. My mom checked me and I had a small nymph on my head. That was an experience I would never forget!

From this section I want to teach others to be aware of what's around them and maybe plan beforehand of what to wear and what to do to be protected from ticks.

After reading all the Symptoms, and reading about ticks, the history, and how to prevent Lyme disease you may think Lyme disease is a difficult disease. It is.

Those symptoms were most of the symptoms my mom had, that tick section you learned about, a tick was on my moms back! This disease is really important to me because my mom, someone I love, had this disease. She went through those symptoms. She inspired me to write this. I didn’t just write this for her though. I wrote this so people like yourself can be aware of this disease. To know the symptoms, to know how to prevent this difficult disease from being diagnosed to you. Everyday my mom thinks, “What if I learned about Lyme disease earlier, would i still have Lyme disease?” “What if ...” “What if ...” “What if ...” Instead of saying this to yourself when you are in bed because you just found out you have chronic Lyme disease, you can take this knowledge you know now and inform this to others, to the people you care and love so they don't have to be saying those things. Do this so your friends and family don't have to go through the things my mom did. This disease is a difficult disease, and important to my family and I. I hope you can tell more people about this disease and prevent the people you know, care about and love from this disease.
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