



**Be on the lookout**

**News from the  
Branch Hillsdale St. Joseph  
Community Health Agency**

**Lyme Disease in Michigan**

**Lyme disease, what is it??** Lyme Disease is a bacterial infection transmitted to people and animals by the bite of an infected tick, much like the one pictured above. The ticks become infected by feeding on small rodents such as mice.

**What are the symptoms of Lyme disease infection?** Symptoms include tiredness, fever, headache, stiff neck, muscle ache, and joint pain. Additionally, about 80% of patients will have a red, slowly expanding bull-eye rash at the point of puncture. Left untreated, patients may develop arthritis, facial palsy, motor and sensory nerve inflammation, and encephalitis (swelling of the brain).

**Can it be transmitted from person to person??** – No. Lyme bacteria are not transmitted from person to person contact.

**How long after I have been bitten will I know I have a problem?** For the red bulls-eye rash, usually 7 to 14 days.

**Do people die from Lyme disease?** No. Lyme disease is rarely, if ever, fatal.

**How many cases of Lyme disease are there each year?** About 15,000 annually in the United States. However 90 % of the cases occur in 10 states, Michigan is not one of those 10. Wisconsin and Minnesota are the closest states on the list. In 2001 Michigan reported 21 cases of Lyme disease statewide.

**How can I remove a tick, and will it help?** – Great question. (thank you). Ticks can be removed with tweezers. Will it help? Definitely, studies show that the tick must be attached for approximately 48 hours to transmit the bacteria.

**Is the disease seasonal or can I get it year round?** – Seasonal. The disease is most common from May through August, when ticks are most active, and humans are more active outdoors.

**How is Lyme disease treated?** - Generally, experts agree that treatment with antibiotics such as amoxicillin for 3-4 weeks is effective in the treatment of Lyme Disease.

**Is there a vaccine against Lyme Disease?** No. There is no vaccine currently available.

**No shot ! Then how do I protect myself?** - Avoid overgrown areas of brush or grass, wear light colored clothing (to make it easier to find them), use insect repellent with DEET, and check yourself for ticks if you visit an area you suspect may have been infested with ticks.

**For more information visit the following web sites**

[www.bhsj.org](http://www.bhsj.org) or [www.wnv.state.mi.us](http://www.wnv.state.mi.us)

Or

**Call the Branch – Hillsdale – St. Joseph Community Health Agency at**  
Coldwater – 517-279-9561 ext. 106 Hillsdale – 1-888-544-7395 ext. 111  
Three Rivers 1-800-258-1092 ext. 233

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