Lyme Disease at a Glance
This fact sheet summarizes the most relevant new and emerging research on the subject of Lyme disease. For more Information, visit RawlsMD.com

1. Borrelia burgdorferi, the bacteria that causes Lyme disease, has been found in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia.

2. Tick-borne diseases are an emerging health threat to people in the United States. In addition to Lyme disease, other tick-borne microbial diseases with an increasing incidence include various strains of Ehrlichia, Rickettsia, Babesia, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, and Powassan virus.

3. Conservatively, there are more than 300,000 new cases of Lyme disease each year. Some research and advocacy organizations suggest the annual incidence may be closer to 427,000 cases.

4. While a bull’s-eye rash is a hallmark sign that an individual has been infected with Lyme disease, it’s unclear how many people, in total, develop a classic erythema migrans. Estimates range widely, from 27% to 80%. Other notable symptoms include fever, chills, sweats, muscle aches, joint pain, fatigue, nausea, Bell’s palsy, and Lyme carditis.

5. The standard diagnostic tests for Lyme are the enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) and the Western blot. In recent years, some healthcare professionals have raised concerns over the reliability of these testing methods because they are indirect tests: They measure the antibody response as opposed to the infection. Since it takes several weeks to develop antibodies, blood tests may produce a false negative result. Some Lyme disease specialists estimate the accuracy of standard Lyme testing is approximately 50%.

6. Even when Lyme is caught in an acute stage and treated according to the CDC and IDSA guidelines, 10% to 20% of patients will continue to have lingering symptoms, including fatigue, muscle and joint pain, sleep disturbances, and cognitive dysfunction. The presence of symptoms after treatment may be known as post-treatment Lyme disease syndrome (PTLDS), but ongoing symptoms may also be caused by the presence of persister forms of the bacteria.

7. The common belief is that ticks must be attached for 24 to 48 hours to transmit Lyme disease. However, European studies demonstrate the infection can be transmitted in less than six hours. The longer a tick is attached to a human host, the greater the risk of contracting Lyme disease, but the risk isn’t reduced to zero when attachment times are shorter. Additionally, other tick-borne diseases may be transmitted in a matter of minutes.

8. There’s a population of people who’ve contracted Lyme disease, but for whom a cut and dry definition doesn’t fit. Often, an acute infection went undiagnosed in these individuals, and they present with a variety of multi-systemic symptoms, some of which can be debilitating. They’ve gone undiagnosed or misdiagnosed for an extended period. To date, there’s no clear consensus on how to treat these individuals. Some medical professionals believe it may be due to an autoimmune response; others suspect a low-grade, persistent infection is present.

9. Besides the physical manifestations associated with Lyme, people can develop a range of neuropsychiatric symptoms following a tick-borne infection, such as major depressive disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, suicidal ideation, and more. Those symptoms may not respond well to traditional treatment approaches, but many will improve when chronic, low-grade infections are treated.

10. Most people associate ticks with summer and wooded areas. However, ticks can be present year-round, especially in parts of the country where winter temperatures remain above freezing. In addition to wooded areas, prime tick habitats include a variety of tall grass species, overgrown or unkempt grass, areas covered in brush piles of leaf litter, and other animals.
The herbs and natural supplements recommended here were curated to support recovery from cognitive symptoms related to chronic Lyme disease and fibromyalgia. While it's an extensive and powerful list, it's not exclusive, so feel free to use other natural therapies that you find beneficial.

Here are a few important things to remember about serving sizes:

• The recommendations you see here are not absolute and are highly dependent on which products you use.
• Serving sizes are for single ingredient use. If you combine multiple ingredients from the same category of therapy, you can usually reduce serving sizes for individual ingredients.
• Responses vary between individuals, and you may gain benefit from lower or higher amounts. When possible, start with the lowest serving size and work your way up.
• Extraction ratios and specifications, when relevant, list indicators of quality and/or potency to help you choose effective products.
• Please consult a qualified healthcare practitioner before using the herbs and ingredients listed here if you are pregnant, have a medical condition, or are taking a medication.

Sources


