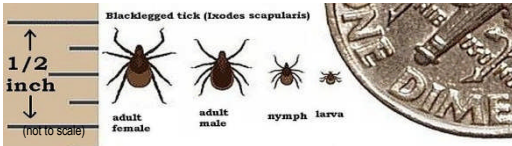




# Nursing Update Lyme Disease



## Fast Facts

Lyme disease is bacterial illness transmitted by deer ticks, which can be the size of a poppy seed to a sesame seed.

Massachusetts ranks 4<sup>th</sup> highest in the nation for Lyme disease cases

80% of cases occur in June and July

Children ages 5-14 have the highest rates of confirmed Lyme disease

Lyme disease causes 95% of all reported tickborne disease cases

Future exposures can cause reinfection, regardless of past treatment

Both confirmed & suspected cases of Lyme disease must be reported within 1-2 business days to MA Department of Public Health.

**Early signs and symptoms to discuss with patients and parents**

- **“Bull’s eye” rash (erythema migrans):** red ring-like OR expanding rash from center of bite outward (does not have to be circular)
- **Flu-like symptoms:** fatigue, fever, stiff neck, facial paralysis, chills, headache, body aches, malaise, swollen lymph node(s) near bite
- **Even if symptoms resolve, patients are likely still infected and need antibiotic treatment to prevent more serious complications**

**Late signs and symptoms or Untreated Lyme disease**

- **Severe fatigue and malaise**
- **Generalized lymphadenopathy**
- **Arthritis and joint dysfunction, especially knees, elbows, wrists**
- **Nerve pain, numbness and tingling, peripheral weakness, Bell’s palsy**
- **Meningitis, encephalitis**
- **AV block, pericarditis**

## Parent & Patient Education



**PREVENTION:** Wear light colored clothing and socks so that ticks are easily spotted. Avoid high grasses and brush. Apply insect repellent containing at least 20% but no more than 30% DEET.



**CHECK BODY DAILY:** Check your body daily for ticks. Inspect areas between toes, behind knees, armpits, groin, neck, hairline, behind ears. Deer ticks are small, so be on the lookout for new “freckles”. Check pets daily as well, since ticks can crawl from animals to humans.



**EARLY REMOVAL:** Using fine point tweezers, grasp tick close to skin and pull straight out with steady pressure. NO other methods are recommended! If you are unsure what kind of tick it is, save it for identification.



**EARLY TREATMENT:** Clean the skin around the bite with soap and warm water. If the tick was embedded <24 hours, note the date and location for future reference and watch for a rash. If the tick was embedded >24 hours, call your doctor or nurse practitioner for advice.