



## FACT SHEET

### Lyme Disease

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#### What is Lyme Disease?

- Lyme Disease is caused by a bacterium called *Borrelia burgdoferi*, which is transmitted by the bites of infected ticks.

#### What are the symptoms?

- The first symptom is usually an expanding red rash which starts at the site of the tick bite, a few days to a few weeks after the tick bite.
- Fever, headache, muscle aches and joint pain may also occur.
- Untreated, later symptoms can include recurring rash, joint pain, heart disease and nervous system disorders.

#### Diagnosis and treatment

- Lyme disease is diagnosed through a physical examination done by a health care provider. The available blood test for antibodies to Lyme Disease is used only as supporting evidence.
- Treatment with oral antibiotics during the early stages reduces the likelihood of later symptoms.
- Alternative or experimental treatment is NOT recommended. Taking antibiotics for every tick bite has not been beneficial, and is not recommended.

#### Prevention

- When working or hiking in areas with ticks, wear light colored long-sleeved shirts, long pants tucked into socks, and closed shoes (not sandals).
- Use tick repellent spray on clothing.
- After outdoor activities, wash clothing and check each person's body, including hair for ticks.
- Pets can also get Lyme disease, so check them also.
- A tick can be removed by grasping its head with thin tipped tweezers and pulling straight out without jerking or twisting.
- Prompt removal of ticks can prevent disease transmission, because there is evidence that ticks must be attached for 24 hours for transmission to occur.

**Report all cases to El Paso Department of Public Health by calling 915-212-6520**