

### Case Management and Treatments for Lyme Disease

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Lyme disease is an illness caused by the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi*, which can be spread through the bite of certain types of ticks.

Lyme disease in humans can have serious symptoms but can be effectively treated. Health Canada states the classic symptoms of Lyme disease are often described in three stages, although not all patients have symptoms of each stage. The first sign of infection is usually a circular rash called *erythema migrans* or EM. This rash occurs in about 70-80% of infected persons and begins at the site of the tick bite after a delay of three days to one month. Patients often also experience symptoms such as:

- Fatigue
- Chills
- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle and joint pain
- Swollen lymph nodes

If the infection goes untreated, the second stage of the disease can last up to several months with possible symptoms including:

- Central and peripheral nervous system disorders
- Multiple skin rashes
- Arthritis and arthritic symptoms
- Heart palpitations
- Extreme fatigue and general weakness

If the infection continues to go untreated, the third stage of the disease can last months to years with possible symptoms including chronic arthritis and neurological symptoms.

#### TREATMENT GUIDELINES PROVIDED FOR

- Predisposing causes of Lyme disease
- Treatment immediately after tick bite
- Treatments after each of the first, second and third stages of Lyme disease symptoms appear
- Treatment when there is a relapse of symptoms

#### KEY LEARNING HIGHLIGHTS

- Identifying the cause
- Recognizing the signs and symptoms
- Tests for verifying Lyme disease
- Little known reasons why some people do not develop Lyme disease after tick bite
- Effective treatments using natural therapy and in combination with conventional therapy
- Long-term case management
- Why treatments fail and the consequences



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