



FACT SHEET

“ONE BITE CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE FOREVER”

The Growing Threat of Lyme Disease & Tick-Borne Infections

- Nearly **500,000** people in the U.S. contract Lyme disease each year.
- Central New York (CNY) is a hotspot for tick-borne infections.
- **Up to 40%** of ticks tested in our area carry Lyme disease and other infections, making the risk of illness from a tick bite significant.

Tick-Borne Disease Transmission & Risks

- *Borrelia burgdorferi* (Lyme disease bacteria) may take hours to transmit, but other infections (co-infections) can be transmitted within minutes after a tick attaches.
- A bull's-eye rash does **NOT** always appear!
- A rash is visible in approximately 50% of cases and may present in different shapes, sizes, and patterns, especially on dark skin tones.
- Current testing may have limited reliability—false negatives are common if tested too early or too late.
- Doctors often rely on clinical symptoms and medical history more than test results.
- Diagnosis may be challenging due to variations in individual symptoms and immune responses and the added complexity of potential co-infections.
- Testing human and pet-encountered ticks for pathogens can help assess potential risks and enable timely medical intervention.

The Impact of Tick-Borne Diseases

- While many recover with a full course of Doxycycline, an estimated **10-30%** experience persistent symptoms even after treatment.
- Doxycycline does **NOT** treat all possible co-infections from a tick bite.

Possible Symptoms of Tick-Borne Diseases:

1

Early Localized

- EM rash (Bullseye)
- Flu-like illness
- Fatigue, fever, chills, muscle soreness
- Headache & stiff neck

2

Early Disseminated

- Lyme carditis (Heart)
- Bell's Palsy (Facial Paralysis)
- Pain/Weakness
- Fatigue, fever, chills, muscle soreness

3

Late Disseminated

- Severe fatigue
- Arthritis in large joints
- Cognitive issues/Brain fog
- Migrating Pains
- Numbness

What To Do If Bitten By a Tick

- Remove the tick properly with fine-point tweezers.
- Save the tick in a sealed plastic bag or plastic wrap, labeled with: Date & Location where the tick was found.
- Get the tick tested to know what infections it carried.
- Upstate Tick Lab: nyticks.org/tick-submission
- **Seek medical attention immediately**, even if symptoms haven't started.

● **Prevention Is Key!** ●

The best approach to tick-borne diseases is:

✓ **PREVENTION** ✓ **EARLY DIAGNOSIS** ✓ **EARLY, EFFECTIVE TREATMENT**