

Lyme Disease

A bacterial infection spread by ticks through their saliva (especially the black legged deer tick). It is not spread from one person to another or from a dog to a person.

An infected tick has to be attached for at least 24 hours to transmit Lyme disease.

It is not a disease recognized in cats.

Signs of Lyme disease can be mild to severe, but all cases left untreated can have serious consequences. The most common of these is kidney disease.

Signs include fever, lethargy, decreased appetite, and lameness with painful joints.

Signs will be seen 2-5 months following an exposure.

This bacteria remains in the body following successful treatment, and it is possible to have future flare ups that require an additional course of medicine.

Diagnosing Lyme disease:

- There are clinical signs consistent with this disease.
- There is a positive blood test (4DX).
- There is a typical response to treatment.
- There is excessive protein in the urine with kidney disease.
- A joint fluid analysis is consistent with Lyme disease.

Treatment for Lyme disease is a 4 week course of antibiotics. Doxycycline is the first choice.

Preventing Lyme disease:

- Check your animals daily for ticks during the tick season.
- Remove ticks as soon as possible.
 - It is best to use a tick removal tool (tick key).
 - Grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible and pull straight up.
- Use a tick repellent, such as
 - Frontline
 - Certifect
 - Advantix
- Lyme vaccination