



## GOALS

### This safety session teaches employees to:

- Understand what Lyme disease is.
- Recognize symptoms.
- Prevent tick bites and deal effectively with bites that occur.

### Applicable Regulations: None



#### 1. What is Lyme disease?

- Lyme disease is a bacterial infection caused by the bite of a tick.
- The bacteria that cause Lyme disease are maintained in the bodies of wild animals and are transmitted through the bite of a tick.
- Humans and pets are incidental hosts to ticks.
- Not all ticks spread disease; the black-legged tick is the common carrier of the disease.
- Untreated, Lyme disease bacteria can attack organ systems and cause serious health problems.
- The human body does not maintain a natural immunity to Lyme disease.
  - You can be reinfected with the disease by subsequent tick bites.

#### 2. What are the symptoms?

- There are two stages of Lyme disease: The first stage is “early, localized,” and the second is “disseminated” (when the disease spreads to different organs).
- Symptoms of early, localized Lyme disease often start with flu-like feelings, including headache, stiff neck, fever, muscle aches, and fatigue.
  - About 60 percent of patients notice an enlarging rash, which sometimes resembles a bruise.
  - The rash may appear within a day of the bite or as much as a month later.
- General symptoms of disseminated Lyme disease include profound fatigue, severe headache, fever, and severe muscle aches and pain.
- Early treatment of localized symptoms is recommended to prevent disseminated Lyme disease.

#### 3. How can you prevent Lyme disease?

- The best way to prevent Lyme disease is to avoid being bitten by a tick.
- Tick-infested areas include wooded areas, low-growing grassland, and the seashore.
  - Avoid these areas during tick season (warm weather months), when possible.
- When it is not possible to avoid tick-infested areas:
  - Use an U.S. Environmentalist Protection Agency (EPA)-approved tick repellent to help protect exposed skin from ticks.
  - Stay in the center of paths, and avoid sitting on the ground.
  - Wear long pants and a long-sleeved shirt to reduce the skin area exposed to ticks.



- Tuck the shirt into your pants, and tuck pants into your socks or boots.
- Wear light-colored clothes and socks so that any ticks can be seen more easily, which gives you the opportunity to remove them before they can attach to your skin and feed.
- Conduct visual tick checks regularly when outside and a final tick check once back inside.
  - Visually inspect your clothing and exposed skin for ticks.
- Remove clothes when you return from an area where ticks might be located, and shower to wash off any loose ticks.
- Place clothing into the dryer for at least 30 minutes in order to kill any ticks.
- Check your body from head to toe, especially the back of the knees, between fingers and toes, underarms, the area beneath underwear elastic, the belt area, neckline, belly button, ears, hairline, and the top of the head.

#### 4. What should you do if you are bitten by a tick?

- Use fine-point tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible.
- Gently apply firm and steady pulling pressure until the tick releases.
  - Do not jerk, twist, squash, or squeeze the tick; wait for the tick to release.
- Clean the wound and the tweezers with an antiseptic, and then wash your hands.
- Watch the tick-bite site and your general health for signs or symptoms of Lyme disease, and make a note of any changes in your health.
  - Call your doctor to determine if treatment is warranted.
- If you want to have the tick checked for disease, place it in a clean vial or plastic bag with a blade of grass; label the container with your name, address, and date of the bite; and contact the state health department for information about testing.



#### DISCUSSION POINTS:

Ask participants to identify areas in their communities where ticks may be found. Have participants describe the steps they take to protect themselves, their families, and their pets from ticks that spread Lyme disease.



#### CONCLUSION:

- Take proper precautions to prevent Lyme disease.
- Working or enjoying recreational activities outdoors in areas where ticks may be present increases your risk of contracting Lyme disease. Always take precautions to prevent illness.



#### TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:

Have your employees take the Preventing Lyme Disease quiz. By testing their knowledge, you can judge their ability to recognize Lyme disease risks and take proper precautions, as well as whether they need to review this important topic again soon.



## PREVENTING LYME DISEASE QUIZ

- All ticks spread Lyme disease.**  
a. True      b. False
- Which of the following are common symptoms of early, localized Lyme disease?**  
a. Nausea and vomiting  
b. Muscle aches and fatigue  
c. Neither a nor b
- Once you've had Lyme disease, you become immune and can't get it again.**  
a. True      b. False
- Tick-infested areas include:**  
a. Wooded areas  
b. Low-growing grassland  
c. Both a and b
- When in areas where ticks may be present, regularly check clothing and exposed skin.**  
a. True      b. False
- To remove ticks attached to the skin, cover them with Vaseline for 15 minutes.**  
a. True      b. False
- Putting clothes worn in tick-infested areas into the dryer for 30 minutes can kill any ticks remaining on clothes.**  
a. True      b. False
- Everyone who is bitten by an infected tick will develop a rash that resembles a bruise at the site of the bite.**  
a. True      b. False
- Wearing a long-sleeved shirt and long pants tucked into socks when walking through tick-infested areas can help prevent Lyme disease.**  
a. True      b. False
- When checking your body for ticks, look:**  
a. At underarms and the back of knees  
b. Between fingers and toes  
c. Both a and b

When you have completed this quiz, turn it in to your supervisor.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## ANSWERS TO PREVENTING LYME DISEASE QUIZ

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1. b. False. The black-legged tick is the common carrier of Lyme disease.
2. b. Symptoms of early, localized Lyme disease (the first stage) include flu-like symptoms such as muscle aches, fatigue, fever, headache, stiff neck and, sometimes, a spreading rash at the site of the bite.
3. b. False. The human body does not maintain a natural immunity to Lyme disease. You can keep getting it.
4. c. Ticks are found in both these areas and also at the seashore.
5. a. True. By conducting regular checks, you can find ticks before they attach and brush them off.
6. b. False. Use fine-point tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible. Gently apply firm and steady pulling pressure until the tick releases. Do not jerk, twist, squash, or squeeze the tick.
7. a. True. This can kill any ticks remaining on clothes.
8. b. False. Only about 60 percent of people bitten by infected ticks develop the rash, which may develop within a day of the bite or as much as a month later.
9. a. True. Also, wear light-colored clothes and socks so that ticks are easier to see.
10. c. Check all these areas, as well as the area beneath underwear elastic, belt area, neckline, belly button, ears, hairline, and top of head.