

Signs & Symptoms

Knowing the Signs & Symptoms of Lyme disease could save you or someone you love



Signs & Symptoms of Lyme Disease

Symptoms vary widely and in advanced stages, can affect all body systems.

fewer than

50%

OF INFECTED PEOPLE
RECALL **A TICK BITE**

fewer than

50%

OF INFECTED PEOPLE
RECALL **A RASH**



Early Infection

Lyme symptoms can appear rapidly or creep in slowly over time.

The first physical signs of the disease are often flu-like; sore throat, stiffness, nausea, headaches; these symptoms are very often overlooked by the individual and their doctor as having the flu. Many individuals who are infected with Lyme disease show little or no early symptoms of the disease.

Treatment with antibiotics in early stage of infection is crucial to prevent further penetration of *Borrelia* into all body systems.

3 stages of Lyme (often blurred together quite rapidly)

Stage 1: Early infection (first few days after infection)

Stage 2: Infection spreads (days to weeks following infection)

Stage 3: Chronic Lyme (days to weeks after infection if left untreated, or not properly treated, for months/years after infection)

Lyme disease is most treatable during Stage 1. As time passes, both treatment and diagnosis become more difficult. Symptoms worsen during each stage of infection, ranging from flu-like symptoms to neurological illnesses, including paralysis. In chronic Lyme disease, every system of the body can be adversely affected.

The incidence of Lyme disease is on the rise in Alberta and across Canada. It's crucial to decrease your risk of infection by taking preventative action and learning important information about Lyme disease.



HEAD/FACE/NECK

- Sore throat; difficulty swallowing, hoarse, phlegm
- Stiff & painful neck
- Jaw pain & stiffness
- Facial paralysis - Bell's palsy
- Headaches
- Twitching - facial & other muscles
- Tingling sensations
- Facial/cheek flushing
- Unexplained hair loss
- Pressure in head; white matter lesions in brain (MRI)

RESPIRATORY, CIRCULATORY & CARDIOVASCULAR

- Shortness of breath, air hunger - can't get full breath, cough
- Endocarditis, heart blockage
- Heart palpitations
- Irregular heartbeat
- Chest pain/sore ribs
- Night sweats, unexplained chills

PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH

- Mood swings & outbursts
- Irritability
- Anxiety/panic attacks
- Depression
- Personality changes, obsessive compulsive disorder, paranoia, panic anxiety attack
- Feeling as if you are losing your mind
- Too much sleep or insomnia
- Difficulty getting to sleep or staying asleep
- Disorientation - getting lost or feeling lost

REPRODUCTIVE & SEXUAL HEALTH

- Sexual dysfunction
- Loss of sex drive
- Testicular or pelvic pain
- Unexplained menstrual irregularity, pain
- Breast tenderness, discharge



AUDITORY/EARS

- Oversensitivity to sound
- Decreased hearing in ear/s
- Tinnitus (buzzing &/or ringing in ear/s)
- Ear pain

MUSCULOSKELETAL

- Muscle pain; migrating & cramps (fibromyalgia)
- Muscle weakness, twitching
- Bone pain
- Joint pain (migrating) & possible swelling
- Stiff joints, neck, back

VISION/EYES

- Double or blurry vision
- eye pain & pressure
- Oversensitivity to light
- Increased floaters

DIGESTIVE & EXCRETORY

- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Gastritis
- Irritable bladder; trouble starting/stopping; interstitial cystitis
- Nausea, vomiting & stomach pain or GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease)



COGNITIVE

- Confusion - not thinking clearly
- Difficulty with concentration, reading, writing, absorbing new information
- Forgetfulness
- Poor short term memory, memory loss
- Disorientation (getting lost, going to wrong place)
- Speech difficulties; slow/strained, (using wrong words, word-searching, stuttering)
- Forgetting how to perform simple tasks

NEUROLOGICAL

- Tingling sensations
- Numbness
- Burning or stabbing or shooting sensations
- Dizziness & spinning
- Head pressure
- Poor balance
- Difficulty walking & impaired coordination
- Dropping or throwing things uncontrollably
- Peripheral neuropathy or partial paralysis
- Fatigue, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
- Light-headedness/wooziness
- Tremors/shakiness Seizures

GENERAL WELL-BEING

- Heavy fatigue
- Sleep patterns disrupted (too much/too little), early awakening, unrestful sleep
- Weight change (loss/gain), Fever/sweats/chills
- Chemical sensitivities
- Allergies Rash - Fewer than 50% of infected recall a rash - DO NOT rely on a rash to diagnose infection
- Multiple & continual infections of different kinds
- Recall having flu-like symptoms that you never seemed to recover from fully
- Low body temperature
- Symptoms change; come and go
- Phantom smells
- Swollen glands or lymph nodes