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Clark County Combined Health District- Health Alert
Lyme Disease in Clark County
July 16, 2024

The Clark County Combined Health District (CCCHD) has noted an increase in cases of Lyme Disease with exposures within Clark County in 2024. Healthcare providers are asked to consider Lyme Disease and other tickborne diseases for patients presenting with tick exposure and appropriate symptoms.

Actions for Clinicians:

1. **Consider tickborne diseases as a differential diagnosis** when evaluating patients with febrile illness, with or without rash. See <https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/symptoms.html> for more information about symptoms of tickborne disease. The attached figure shows various forms of erythema migrans (EM) rash associated with Lyme disease.
2. **Familiarize yourself with the laboratory tests available to diagnose Lyme Disease:** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends two-tiered serological testing (attached) to properly test for evidence of antibodies against Lyme disease bacteria.
 - **Patients should first be tested by enzyme immunoassay (EIA) or immunofluorescent assay (IFA)**, and positive and equivocal results should be confirmed by further testing with the more specific Western blot test depending on date of symptom onset:
 - Patients with symptom onset \leq 30 days should be tested using **both** the IgM **and** IgG Western Blot, **OR**
 - Patients with symptom onset $>$ 30 days should be tested with the IgG Western Blot **ONLY**.

The following are important points to remember:

- **A Western blot should not be run without first performing and EIA or IFA.**
 - The Western blot should not be run if the EIA or IFA tests are negative.
 - A positive IgM western blot is only meaningful during the first 4 weeks of illness.
 - If the person has been ill for longer than 4-6 weeks and the IgG Western blot test is negative, it is unlikely the person has Lyme disease, even if the IgM Western blot is positive.
3. **Promptly report suspected cases of tickborne infections** to CCCHD.
 4. **Remind patients to take preventative measures.** These include recognizing and avoiding tick habitats, using [US Environmental Protection Agency-approved insect repellents](#) when outdoors, showering immediately after returning indoors, performing tick checks, and removing ticks promptly. When performing tick checks, patients should pay special attention to under the arms, in and around ears, inside belly buttons, backs of knees, in and around hair, between the legs, and around the waist.

Resources:

- More detailed information about Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases in Ohio, as well as information on personal protection, disease prevention and educational materials can be found on the ODH tickborne disease website: www.odh.ohio.gov/tick. Please contact CCCHD at 937-390-5600 if you have questions or would like to order educational materials.
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: Find the Repellent that is Right for You: <https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/find-repellent-right-you>

Attachments:

- The Many Forms of Lyme Disease Rashes
- CDC Two-Tiered Testing for Lyme Disease algorithm



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Message Details

Date: 7/16/2024

Time Sensitivity: Urgent

To: Medical offices, Urgent Cares, Clinics, Hospitals, Laboratories and ICPs

Target Audience: Physicians, PA, NP, Nurses, Medical Staff, ICP staff, and Laboratorians

Relevance to Public Health: High Concern

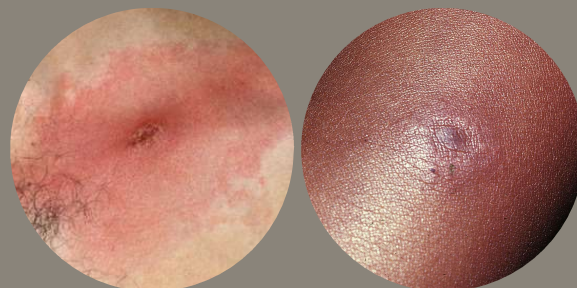


The Many Forms of Lyme Disease Rashes (Erythema Migrans)

Faint colors and borders



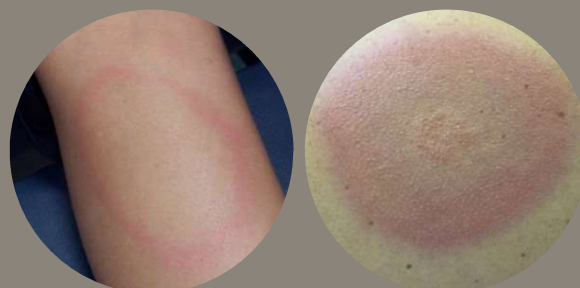
Crusted centers



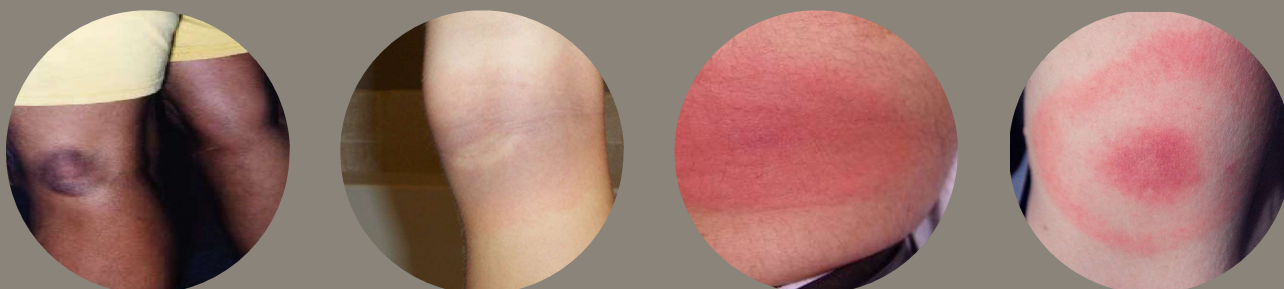
More than one rash



Different shapes and colors



Appearing anywhere on the body



Most people with Lyme disease develop an erythema migrans rash at the site of the tick bite. The rash usually expands slowly over several days reaching up to 12 inches or more (30 cm) across. **However, not all rashes are a sign of Lyme disease.** The redness in the picture to the left is caused by irritation to the tick bite — not a tickborne infection.

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Learn more about Lyme disease symptoms at
www.cdc.gov/lyme/signs_symptoms



Two-Tiered Testing for Lyme Disease

First Test

Second Test

