



Ticks and Lyme disease: resources for you & your patients

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection that can be transmitted to humans when they are bitten by an infected tick. It is the commonest tick-borne disease in the UK.

Frontline healthcare practitioners play a key role both in promoting **awareness** of tick borne infections amongst their patients and in the early **diagnosis and management** of Lyme disease.

Awareness

Ticks are widespread across Great Britain and are most active in the spring and summer months. Lyme disease can be contracted anywhere where humans come into contact with ticks - in the countryside, urban parks or private gardens. It is important not to dismiss any areas as 'zero risk'. For travellers, Lyme disease is particularly prevalent in parts of central, eastern and northern Europe (including Scandinavia) and in the [north eastern states of the US](#).

It is important for the public to be aware of ticks - to know what measures to take to avoid being bitten, how to perform tick checks on themselves, family members and pets and how to remove any attached tick promptly and safely.

Please print and display [this poster](#) in your surgery to encourage your patients to be tick aware when enjoying the outdoors this summer.

Further sources of awareness information for patients and the public

- PHE produces [this leaflet](#) about tick awareness which you can make available in your surgery.
- Other tick awareness resources, including a video, are available [here](#).
- Information for patients from the NHS is available [here](#).

Diagnosis and management

National guidance for healthcare practitioners on the diagnosis and management of Lyme disease is available [here](#).

Lyme disease most commonly presents as a spreading red rash ([erythema migrans](#), 'EM') which looks like a bull's eye around the bite area. These cases should be treated on clinical suspicion.

About a third of Lyme disease cases do not notice a rash and may present with non-specific flu-like symptoms such as fever, fatigue, myalgia and headache. Consider a range of [differential diagnoses](#) and [laboratory testing](#) to reach a diagnosis.

If recognised and treated promptly most cases will resolve without complications. Antibiotic treatment guidelines for different presentations of Lyme disease are specified in the national guidance and in this [bmj visual summary](#).

Further sources of information for healthcare practitioners

- a 30 minute [RCGPLEarning course](#) for your CPD
- [resources and guidance](#) from PHE