

# Lyme Disease and Tick Bites

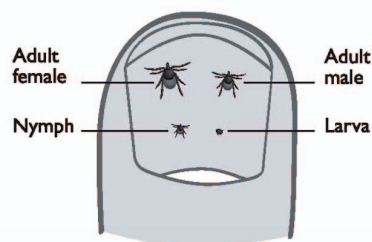
## What is Lyme disease?

### LYME DISEASE

Is caused by a bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi*

### SPREAD BY

The bite of a tick (a tiny spider-like creature)



### TICKS ARE FOUND

In woodland, moorland and other grassy areas in moist undergrowth

### WHO IS AT RISK?

Ramblers, campers, mountainbikers, and people who work and walk in forested/grassy areas

### HOW COMMON IS LYME DISEASE IN IRELAND

The true incidence is not known, recent estimates suggest around 200 confirmed cases per year

### SYMPTOMS OF LYME DISEASE

A rash (erythema migrans) appears 3-30 days after bite in about 75% of cases

Other symptoms include fever, chills, headaches, stiff neck, fatigue, muscle aches and joint pain.

The heart and nervous system can become affected in severe cases.

Photo courtesy of CDC/James Gathany



Erythema migrans skin rash

## Protecting yourself against tick bites

### AVOID TICK BITES

1. Wear long trousers, long sleeved shirt and shoes
2. Use an insect repellent
3. After your day out, check skin, hair and warm skinfolds (especially the neck and scalp of children)

### TICK BITES-WHAT TO DO

1. If the tick is removed within a few hours, you are very unlikely to become infected
2. Remove the tick (with tweezers) by gripping it close to the skin. Wash with soap and water
3. Remove any mouthparts with tweezers
4. Over the next few weeks check the area for swelling/redness
5. If a rash/other symptoms develop, see your GP and report the tick bite



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