



Lyme Disease is Found Worldwide

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Ticks, scientifically known as *Ixodes scapularis*, are responsible for infecting humans with Lyme disease. Although deer ticks are commonly associated with Lyme disease, other animals carrying the tick include white-footed field mice, deer, raccoons, opossums, skunks, weasels, foxes, shrews, moles, chipmunks, squirrels, and horses.

Lyme disease seems to be spreading, with more and more cases reported in the recent years. This may be due to the fact that the disease spread, but it is also it may be due to the growing public awareness and the work of Public Health Departments.

Geographical distribution of Lyme disease

This condition is found everywhere in the world except Antarctica and some areas have a higher prevalence compared with others. For example, in the United States, Lyme disease is the most common vector-borne disease and has been reported in almost all states with a higher prevalence in the coastal northeast, Mid-Atlantic States, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, and northern California. It should be noted that not all ticks are infected. However, New York and Connecticut report up to 90% of ticks are infected, meaning that with almost every tick bite there is a high probability of contracting Lyme disease as well as other secondary infections, according to Center of Disease Control and Prevention. Alaska has also reported high incidences of Lyme disease.

This disease has also been found in Canada, with higher incidence rates in Ontario and British Columbia (BC). Research suggests that Lyme disease started in eastern Canada and spread across the country to southeastern Manitoba and regions of Nova Scotia. British Columbia is the latest province where Lyme disease has become endemic, with an estimated 50% of ticks being infected with Lyme and co-infections. In British Columbia, *Borrelia burgdorferi* spirochetes were found in domestic and wild animals including lizards as well.

Lyme disease is extremely common in Europe, in fact it is much more prevalent compared with the United States and Canada. The highest prevalence has been found in the Czech Republic, followed by Germany, Finland, Estonia, Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Norway, Scotland and Britain.

Central and South America are also affected by Lyme disease. In South America, tick-borne diseases reports are growing. In some areas of the Caribbean Islands, Colombia, Bolivia, Mexico, Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Costa Rica have reported isolated, yet, increasing numbers of cases of Lyme disease.

Most cases of Lyme disease in Asia are found in Japan, followed by Northwest China and far eastern Russia and Mongolia. Some cases have been diagnosed in Taiwan, Korea and India as well.

In Africa, Australia, the Pacific Islands and New Zealand have all reported isolated incidences of Lyme disease symptoms.

In conclusion, Lyme disease has no borders and its incidence is increasing worldwide. Beware of its symptoms (which often can mimic other medical conditions) and talk to your doctor to get tested for Lyme disease.

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