

# FAST FACTS



- 1 Lyme disease is the **fastest-growing vector-borne disease** in the US.
- 2 According to the CDC, there are ~ **500,000 new cases of Lyme disease annually** in the US.
- 3 The current “gold standard” **diagnostic test misses up to 70% of acute or early-stage infections.**
- 4 **20–30% of patients develop long-term health issues**, even after antibiotic treatment, and develop what is described as persistent or chronic Lyme.
- 5 **Lyme disease is just one of many bacterial infections** that can be transmitted to humans from infected ticks.
- 6 **There are over a dozen different pathogens** (bacteria, viruses and parasites) that infected ticks can transmit to humans.
- 7 **Ticks carry multiple pathogens that cause disease other than Lyme in humans**, including anaplasmosis, babesiosis, Colorado tick fever, ehrlichiosis, Lyme disease, Pacific Coast tick fever, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, tularemia, tick-borne relapsing fever, and other coinfections.
- 8 There are **eight known species of ticks located around the US that vector pathogens** to humans.
- 9 **Children ages 8–15 have the highest incidence of Lyme disease**—they may need help with tick-checks (or be reminded to do them).
- 10 **Ticks are found everywhere**—in domestic gardens, near beaches, and even in urban parks.
- 11 **Tick populations are growing and their range is expanding throughout the US**—ticks and infected ticks are in previously unrecorded geographical regions.
- 12 In the Western and Southern US, “**tick season**” is **year-round** and ticks are continually active, although potential exposure typically peaks in the spring and early summer.
- 13 Ticks can be so tiny (the size of a poppy seed or smaller) that **many people never see the tick that bit them** and are completely unaware that they have been infected.
- 14 **Only ~20% of people bitten by ticks develop a tell-tale “bullseye” rash** which is often what doctors look for to diagnose Lyme disease. Be alert for expanding rashes!
- 15 **The presentation of the rash can be extremely variable** depending on age, skin tone, race, and other factors. At least 20–30% of people never develop a rash. Be alert for **expanding rashes!**
- 16 **Wild mammals are the typical reservoirs for tick-borne diseases**—including deer, squirrels, rabbits, mice, and other animals. Ticks feed on these animals and become infected.
- 17 **Ticks can be tested for pathogens, dead or alive**—Keep the tick moist by wrapping it in a piece of damp paper towel. Go to [www.tickreport.com](http://www.tickreport.com) or [www.ticknology.org](http://www.ticknology.org) for information.
- 18 **Pets can get sick, too.** Dogs and horses should be tested for Lyme and other tick-borne infections.

