

Lyme Disease 101/Tickborne Illnesses (by Mary Jane Heppe and OLDN)

1. We DO have Lyme in Oregon. Historically, Hood River County has a high rate of infected ticks. (“*The Ticks of Oregon, Chamberlain, 1937*). (“*Lyme Disease in Oregon, Doggett, Kohlhepp, et.al.,2008*).

2. Everyone with Lyme does NOT get a bulls-eye rash. According to the CDC, only approximately 40% develop a rash (not necessarily a bulls-eye rash). Many people never recall a tick bite.

3. Lyme disease—if not caught early—can become difficult to cure. Other factors can cause Lyme to be more difficult to treat, including other infections spread by ticks. This is a systemic disease that can affect multiple organs. Left untreated, it can cause permanent damage.

4. Lyme ticks travel in many ways. The white-footed mouse is the most common host of Lyme Disease. There is documented evidence that birds are reservoirs for Lyme Disease (“*Borrelia Burgdorferi sensu lato Spirochetes and Wild Birds, Newman, Lane, et al, 2015*.) However, any domestic or wild animal could be carrying these ticks, whether you live in the city or outside of the city.

5. Information on prevention measures [can be found here](#)

6. Information on symptoms [can be found here](#)

What to do if you get a tick bite

Remove the tick with tweezers by pulling straight out. If you can't remove it completely, go to the emergency room ASAP. [More information on tick removal and testing can be found here.](#) If you use the tickase tool, and you are using the slotted scoop, do not twist-- and MOVE SLOWLY so you don't cut the tick head off! If you want to identify your tick, get the awesome [new APP called "TickTracker"](#)!

Save and send the tick in for testing. It's much easier and significantly cheaper to test the tick than it is to test a person. An infected person may take weeks or months to test positive - tests catch only about 50% of the cases. Some people infected with Lyme disease never test positive on any Lyme test. SEND YOUR TICK TEST RESULTS TO [Oregon Lyme Disease Network](#) (= OLDN) for inclusion in our database of ticks:Theresa@OrgeonLyme.com

- [Colorado testing lab](#)
- [East coast testing lab](#)
- [West coast testing lab](#)

See a Lyme literate doctor if the tick is embedded for more than just a couple hours.

Please contact Mary Jane Heppe or Elaine Walker for more information, their contact info is below.

According to the [International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society \(ILADS\)](#), typically 4-6 weeks of doxycycline in early-stage disease (30 days or less) should kill the Lyme bacteria and prevent chronic illness. [Minimum effective treatment is listed in their guidelines.](#) See p.14 for best doxycycline dose. Also look at [LymeCME.info](#) under “managing blacklegged tick bites.”

Questions? Contact OLDN's Mid-Columbia Lyme Group Leaders Elaine Walker, 541-490-4019, and Mary Jane Heppe, 541-806-3114. Hood River meetings are the first Tuesday of each month from 5:30-7PM at the Hood River Valley Adult Center, 2010 Sterling Place, Hood River.

Resources: [Excellent video on "The History of Lyme"](#) and [\(Oregon Lyme Disease Network, OLDN\)](#)