

## Lyme Disease Reading Comprehension

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Lyme disease is an illness caused by bacteria and spread by ticks. It can be challenging to diagnose and is not contagious, but can be treated with two to four weeks of antibiotics.

Lyme disease is named for the town in Connecticut where its root cause was discovered: spirochetal bacteria. Spirochetal is actually a category of bacteria characterized by spiral-shaped cells, common in tick hosts such as deer and mice. When ticks feed on these animals, they spread Lyme disease to their future hosts. If an infected tick latches onto a human, and is undetected for 36 hours or more, it can transmit the dreaded illness. Only a small percentage of tick bites actually lead to Lyme disease.

Initial symptoms of Lyme disease might manifest as a circular or bulls-eye-shaped rash at the location of the tick bite, but not always. Once the disease spreads, other symptoms may arise, including dizziness, fever, arthritis in the joints, or heart palpitations. Some people develop chronic Lyme disease, which can result in long-term, debilitating symptoms. The wide variety of symptoms associated with Lyme disease make it challenging for doctors to effectively diagnose it. Blood tests designed to screen for Lyme disease are known to be unreliable and those that have the disease often test negative for it and those that don't have the disease can test positive for it. Because of the unreliability associated with Lyme disease tests, doctors will often prescribe antibiotics for tick-borne illnesses such as Lyme disease if a person presents with typical Lyme disease symptoms even if they test negative for it.

Treatment for Lyme disease with antibiotics can lead to speedy recovery, especially with an early diagnosis. Preventative methods to from getting Lyme disease in the first place can be equally as helpful. Tying up long hair, wearing long-sleeved clothing and closed-toed shoes, and using insect repellent are all good ways to avoid tick bites when outside. Ticks tend to collect in moist, shady areas or places with tall grass or shrubs, so remaining vigilant when outdoors is a good practice towards avoiding Lyme completely.

### 1. Which word or phrase best describes the first paragraph?

- Detailed
- Complicated
- Comprehensive
- General

**2. You likely do NOT have Lyme disease if...**

- a. you have a bulls-eye shaped rash.
- b. you have a fever and sore joints.
- c. you removed a tick from your leg that had been there for a few hours.
- d. you need antibiotics for a fever.

**3. Which of the following is NOT true about Lyme disease?**

- a. A high percentage of tick bites results in Lyme disease
- b. There are many ways to avoid being bitten by ticks
- c. Lyme disease may lead to chronic symptoms
- d. Treatment for Lyme Disease can work quickly

**4. Which of the following best describes the tests used to diagnose Lyme disease?**

- a. Lyme disease tests are almost always correct
- b. While Lyme disease tests can be helpful in diagnosing the illness, they are hardly ever correct
- c. Lyme disease tests usually result in people testing negative
- d. While Lyme disease tests can be helpful in diagnosing the illness, they are sometime inaccurate

**5. What word could replace “debilitating” in the following sentence?**

Some people develop chronic Lyme disease, which can result in long-term, debilitating symptoms.

- a. ideal
- b. painful
- c. frustrating
- d. unfriendly

**6. What is implied in the following sentence?**

Because of the unreliability associated with Lyme disease tests rate, doctors will often prescribe antibiotics for tick-borne illnesses such as Lyme disease if a person presents with typical Lyme disease symptoms even if they test negative for it.

- a. Tests for Lyme disease are actually more accurate than previously thought
- b. Everybody should get antibiotics if they have seen a tick
- c. There are other diseases transmitted by ticks besides Lyme disease
- d. Most people test negatively for Lyme disease

**7. Which question is NOT answered in the passage?**

- a. What percentage of tick bites prove positive for Lyme disease?
- b. Can Lyme disease be spread from one person to another?
- c. If a person tests positive for Lyme disease, how long will he or she be on antibiotics for?
- d. Why is an early diagnosis for Lyme disease advantageous?