



PETS & LYME DISEASE



Avoiding tick-infested areas is the best way to protect your pet from Lyme. This is especially true in the spring when young ticks are most active.

It's important to routinely check your animals for ticks, particularly if you live in high-risk areas or have recently visited one. Vets have access to a reliable blood test so if your vet suggests testing for Lyme, it's a good idea

Symptoms

Dogs

Dogs can be vaccinated against Lyme disease, but the vaccine is relatively new and somewhat controversial. Most veterinarians only recommend vaccinating dogs that live in tick-infested areas. For more information about tick control product consult your veterinarian.

- Common symptoms include: arthritis (sudden lameness), pain, fever, lack of appetite, dehydration, inactivity and swollen lymph nodes and joints.

Cats

Lyme disease in cats is rare, but not unheard-of. In most cases, Lyme is diagnosed only when an infected-tick is discovered.

- Known symptoms include: pain, stiffness in limbs and joints, lameness, fever, loss of appetite, fatigue, sudden collapse, a “zombie-like” trance, and, in cases of heavy infestation, severe anemia.

Horses

Lyme disease is very common in horses. Some studies show that 50% of horses in high-risk areas will contract Lyme disease over their lifetime. Horses are at a higher risk than other animals because ticks often go unnoticed. Adult ticks, which are present in the fall and spring, are the stage most likely to feed on horses. An adult tick is usually large enough to be detected during grooming. Ticks are often found about the head, throatlatch area, belly and under the tail.

- To reduce your horse's risk of infection, check for ticks often and remove them quickly if found. Common symptoms include: chronic weight loss, erratic lameness, laminitis (inflammation of the tissues inside the hoof wall), fever, swollen joints, muscle tenderness, eye inflammation, and stiffness.
- Neurological signs include: depression, dysphagia (difficulty swallowing), head tilt and encephalitis.



Diagnosis

It's difficult to accurately diagnose animals with Lyme disease. In most cases, a Lyme diagnosis is based on whether the pet lives in a tick-infested area, has signs of arthritis or responds to treatment.

Treatment

Pets usually respond quickly to antibiotic treatments. Be sure to follow-up with your vet right away if your pet's condition doesn't improve. Pets left untreated are at high-risk for developing Chronic Lyme Disease, which may cause kidney damage and even death.

Source: *The Canadian Lyme Disease Foundation (CanLyme)*

<http://canlyme.com/lyme-prevention/pets>

This does NOT substitute for medical advice. Please seek help from your veterinarian if there is any problem with your pet.