

# Lyme Disease



June 2026

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection that spreads to people through a tick bite. The bacteria that causes Lyme is *Borrelia burgdorferi* and rarely *Borrelia mayonii*.



## Symptoms

- Fever
- Chills
- Headache
- Fatigue or brain fog
- Muscle aches
- Joint pain
- Bullseye rash
- Neck stiffness
- Bell's (facial) palsy
- Heart palpitations or irregular heartbeat (Lyme carditis)

\*Long-term symptoms can occur even after treatment, though it is not known why.



## Diagnosis

- Evaluation of symptoms
- Tick exposure history
- Laboratory testing: blood testing
  - Most accurate early into illness (within first 4 weeks of exposure)



## Treatment

Talk with your healthcare provider about the best treatment options.

- Early antibiotic treatment (doxycycline, amoxicillin) helps reduce the risk of joint, nerve, and heart complications.

## How do you get Lyme?

Bite from an infected blacklegged tick

- Tick must be attached for 24 to 48 hours to spread Lyme disease



Less than 50% of ticks have Lyme disease

## How can I prevent Lyme?

### Before and during time outside

- Stay on trails: avoid grassy, bushy, or wooded areas where ticks live
- Wear long pants, long sleeves, and closed-toe shoes
- Tuck your pants into your socks
- Spray your clothes and gear with 0.5% permethrin
- Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)- registered insect repellent

### After being outside

- Shake out your clothing outside or put your clothes in the dryer for 10 minutes on high heat
- Shower within two hours
- Check daily for ticks: inspect your entire body, including underarms, groin, scalp, behind ears, behind knees
- Consider using a lint roller to remove ticks you cannot see
- If you have a dog, check them for ticks

# Types of ticks

In Ohio, ticks are commonly found in the eastern and southern counties.

Ticks like to hide in wooded and bushy areas.

Most common tick types in Ohio:

- American dog
- Blacklegged (deer tick)
- Lone star

Only the blacklegged (deer) tick spreads Lyme disease in Ohio.

Ticks are active throughout the year, but most start to be active in late March or early April.

Tick activity is the highest during :

- May and June
- October and November

# How to remove a tick



**Step 1:** Using tweezers, grab the tick as close to your skin as possible



**Step 2:** Gently pull the tick upward until it's out of your skin. Do not twist or jerk the tick



**Step 3:** Dispose tick by putting it in rubbing alcohol, a sealed bag/container, wrapping it tightly in tape, or flushing it down the toilet.



**Step 4:** Clean the bite area and your hands with soap and water or rubbing alcohol

- Remove the tick as soon as possible.
- If tick mouth parts remain in the skin, leave them alone. In most cases, they will fall out in a few days.
- Don't use nail polish, petroleum jelly, or a hot match to make the tick detach.
- If you develop a fever or rash within a few weeks of a tick bite, contact your healthcare provider and mention when and where the bite occurred.

In 2025,  
2,018 blacklegged ticks  
were identified across  
68 Ohio counties  
(0 in Wood)

# Can I get a tick tested?

Wood County Health Department does not test for ticks. Ticks can be tested through private laboratories.

Tick testing is not always recommended:

- A positive tick test does NOT mean you have Lyme because it may have not been attached to you long enough to spread Lyme disease.
- A negative test does not rule out exposure from another tick bite.
- Results can delay medical decisions and may not be accurate.



# Lyme Disease Trends

## United States

In 2023: 89,468 cases

- 57% male
- Most common age: 60 to 69 years

## Ohio

In 2025: 2,972 cases

- 56% male
- Median age: 43 years

## Wood County

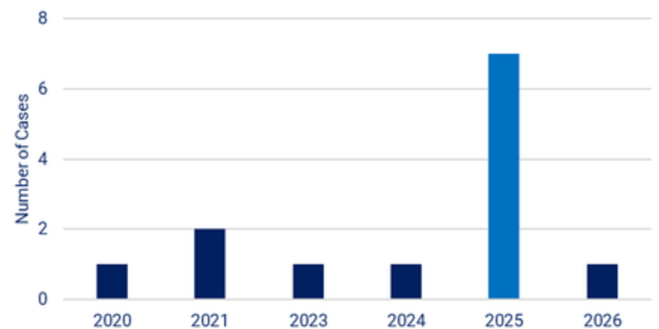
In 2025: 8 cases

From 2020 to 2026\*:

- 56% female
- Median age: 33 years

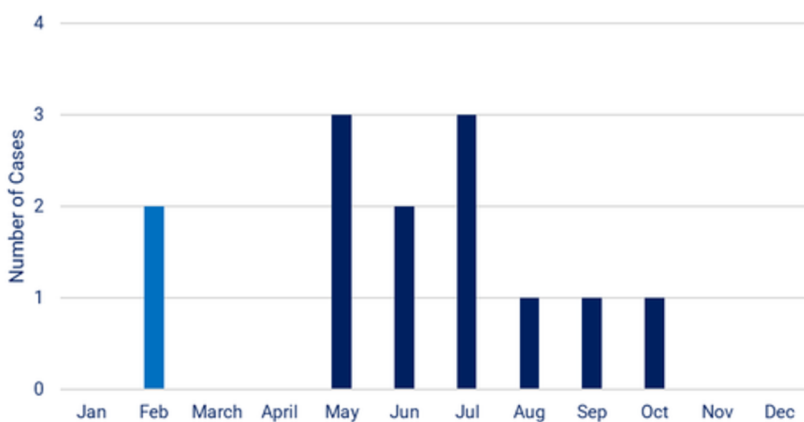
\*Cases were summarized over a 6-year time-frame to help protect the identities of cases

Lyme disease cases in Wood County nearly tripled in 2025 compared to previous years.



\*Cases in 2026 include Jan through May and may increase if more cases are reported in the future.

Lyme cases in Wood County reported their illness started in May and July.



85% of Wood County Lyme cases traveled outside of Wood County.

69% of these cases traveled to areas outside of Ohio.



## Data Sources

- Ohio Disease Reporting System
- Ohio Department of Health Summary of Infectious Diseases in Ohio
- CDC Lyme Disease Surveillance Data

## Resources

CDC Tick Bite Guide: <https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/communication-resources/tick-bite-bot-1.html>

Mayo Clinic Minute: Tips to best remove ticks video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bl-FDjI22-s>

Ohio Department of Health Tickborne Diseases in Ohio: <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/zoonotic-disease-program/diseases/tickborne-diseases>