

Signs and Symptoms of Untreated Lyme Disease

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"Classic" erythema migrans rash



Facial palsy



Swollen knee

Early Signs and Symptoms (3 to 30 days after tick bite)

- Fever, chills, headache, fatigue, muscle and joint aches, and swollen lymph nodes
- Erythema migrans (EM) rash:
 - Occurs in approximately 70 to 80 percent of infected persons
 - Begins at the site of a tick bite after a delay of 3 to 30 days (average is about 7 days)
 - Expands gradually over a period of days reaching up to 12 inches or more (30 cm) across
 - May feel warm to the touch but is rarely itchy or painful
 - Sometimes **clears as it enlarges, resulting in a target or "bull's-eye" appearance**
 - May appear on any area of the body

- See [examples of EM rashes\(https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/signs_symptoms/rashes.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/signs_symptoms/rashes.html)

Later Signs and Symptoms (days to months after tick bite)

- Severe headaches and neck stiffness
- Additional EM rashes on other areas of the body
- Arthritis with severe joint pain and swelling, particularly the knees and other large joints.
- Facial palsy (loss of muscle tone or droop on one or both sides of the face)
- Intermittent pain in tendons, muscles, joints, and bones
- Heart palpitations or an irregular heart beat ([Lyme carditis\(https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/signs_symptoms/lymecarditis.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/signs_symptoms/lymecarditis.html))
- Episodes of dizziness or shortness of breath
- Inflammation of the brain and spinal cord
- Nerve pain
- Shooting pains, numbness, or tingling in the hands or feet
- Problems with short-term memory

Notes

- Fever and other general symptoms may occur in the absence of rash.
- A small bump or redness at the site of a tick bite that occurs immediately and resembles a mosquito bite, is common. This irritation generally goes away in 1-2 days and is not a sign of Lyme disease.
- A rash with a very similar appearance to EM occurs with [Southern Tick-associated Rash Illness \(STARI\)](#), but is not Lyme disease
- Ticks can spread [other organisms\(https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/diseases/index.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/diseases/index.html) that may cause a [different type of rash\(https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/symptoms.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/symptoms.html).

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