



# LYME DISEASE



*Happy Fall!*

MID-HUDSON VETERINARY PRACTICE, P.C.

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## What is Lyme disease?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) this area (New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania) is one of the highest risk areas for Lyme disease transmission in the country.

Lyme disease is caused by the spirochete bacteria, *Borrelia burgdorferi*, and is transmitted through the bite of an infected tick. Although not all ticks are infected, in our region, the deer tick (*Ixodes dammini*) is the common carrier of this illness.



Some of the more common signs of *Borrelia burgdorferi* (Lyme) infection include;

- Lethargy
- Skin sensitivity
- Joint stiffness
- Worsening arthritis
- Behavioral changes

Lyme disease can be difficult to diagnose, as symptoms can be vague and mimic other diseases. Blood testing is the most reliable indicator of exposure. Our doctors recommend two different types of lab tests to check the level of serum antibodies to *Borrelia burgdorferi*. The presence of these antibodies indicates exposure or, less commonly, vaccination. Testing is done at the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory and results can be expected in 10 to 14 days.

The decision to treat Lyme disease is usually based on the severity of the test results in combination with the horse's symptoms. Results of treatment are usually seen within the first 4 to 10 days, but can take up to 3 weeks or more.



Mark Jordan, DVM  
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## How is Lyme disease treated?

Our practice currently recommends the following Lyme disease treatments for horses;

**Doxycycline** Tablets are given, orally, twice a day for at least thirty days.

or

**Oxytetracycline** is administered daily, via an IV catheter that is sutured in place by the veterinarian. This treatment is administered by the owner and requires that the horse remain in a stall during the duration of the twenty-one day treatment.



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Call us for more information

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