

Lyme Disease, 1-Year Update

By: Melinda Sperl

I cannot believe how much my life changed over the last year. For those who don't know, last Memorial weekend I traveled on vacation to Wisconsin and was bit by a tick carrying Lyme disease. There is no cure for this disease and although I knew right away I had the disease, it really has been a very long recovery. I believe that as of today, I might, be able to put it behind me. In my case the worst part was that I had no immunity so I caught every infectious disease I was exposed to including Mono. This has not only been challenging to recover but also to try to run my business. I would really like to thank all of our customers who have stuck with us; at times it has been tough!

While Lyme disease has a higher infection rate in the Northern states it has also has been reported in Texas and first exhibits with flu-like symptoms. If left untreated it can develop into conditions that are more serious. How I recognized my own disease was: 1) I knew I had been bitten and 2) within two days of being bitten I developed flu-like symptoms without the fever. My doctor immediately put me on antibiotics, which actually stopped me from some of the more damaging symptoms of the disease. I really feel for those that were not as lucky as I am as this has been a hard year.

I was infected in Wisconsin but ticks that carry Lyme disease (and a host of other diseases) range all over the world. I would like to remind you all that when you are on vacation, camping, walking or playing in the woods or tall grass, make sure that you use a protective product like DEET. I had on shorts and flip-flops in knee high grass, but even then, the tick was on my head. I used to avoid DEET as I didn't like the smell and thought it might be harmful to me. Since then I have found that the product is not harmful and I would rather recommend using that than anyone going through what I have!

If you have deer in your area they are very prone to ticks so make sure you and your pets are protected. Lyme disease ticks are also referred to as "deer ticks". Protect your pets from fleas with products applied to the back of their neck but make sure you read the label to ensure it covers ticks too as not all do. The products sold over the counter are usually not as strong as those your vet will sell.

Enjoy Nature as I continue to do. Just do it wisely.

Happy Gardening!

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