

TradMaD Camp at Pinewoods

Information about Lyme Disease

As you may be aware, the area around Pinewoods (Southeastern Massachusetts) is known to be an area where the incidence of both Lyme disease and Babesiosis is particularly high. In recent years there have been several cases of Lyme disease both in our campers and in the community surrounding camp. There have been at least two case of Babesiosis in individuals who spent time at camp, or out on the Cape before coming to camp. We therefore felt it important to provide you with information about both diseases.

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection that is transmitted to humans via a bite from an infected deer tick. Babesiosis is malaria like illness caused by a protozoan parasite, also transmitted by the deer tick. Deer ticks are very small (about the size of a pinhead), and it is possible to have been bitten and not be aware of it.

Ticks hang out on vegetation and wait for a host to pass by. Staying on established paths and away from long grass and underbrush can greatly reduce your likelihood of being "boarded" by a tick. Repellants containing DEET can also be helpful.

Symptoms of Lyme disease include: fever, aches, fatigue, flu-like symptoms, and a circular "bull's-eye" type rash around the site of the bite. *However, not everyone infected with Lyme disease develops the bulls-eye rash.* Symptoms of Babesiosis include malaise, anorexia and fatigue, followed by high fever, drenching sweats, muscle pain, and headaches. Symptoms can abate and then recur.

In its early stages Lyme disease is easily treatable with antibiotics, but if left untreated it can cause serious long-term and chronic conditions, including arthritis and cardiac problems. Babesiosis can be treated with oral doses of quinine plus clindamycin.

Please take the time to check your body for ticks daily (they wander around for a while before picking a place to attach). If you have further questions or concerns, we suggest you talk to your health care provider. In addition, further information on both illnesses can be obtained from the following organizations:

The Lyme Disease Foundation
<http://www.lyme.org>
info@lyme.org

American Lyme Disease Foundation
www.aldf.com
inquire@aldf.com