

# LYME DISEASE & YOUR PET



## What is Lyme disease?

Lyme disease in dogs is one of the most common tick-transmitted diseases in the world—and according to the Companion Animal Parasite Council, the number of canine Lyme disease cases is increasing.

It's caused by infection with the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi*, which is transmitted to humans and animals through the bite of infected blacklegged ticks, such as deer ticks. Northeastern and mid-Atlantic states, including North Carolina, are high-risk areas; however, the disease is rapidly spreading as ticks multiply and thrive in increasingly warmer weather.

The most common symptoms of Lyme disease in dogs are:

- Lameness
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Joint swelling
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite



## How can Lyme disease be prevented?

Monthly flea and tick preventative significantly reduces the likelihood of infection. While there is a vaccine that might reduce the risk, it cannot replace good tick control because it is not completely effective at preventing Lyme disease.

However, the Lyme vaccine can add an extra layer of defense for dogs that spend a lot of time outside or are regularly exposed to wooded areas. While urban pets are at lower risk and may not benefit from the vaccine, it's still important to protect them with year-round prescription flea and tick preventatives.

Tick-borne diseases impact people too, which is a great reason to use a preventative that kills ticks your dog encounters before they get into your home.

## What are lifestyle vaccines?

While there are core vaccinations all pets should receive, there are additional immunizations, like the Lyme disease vaccine, that we recommend depending on your pet's lifestyle. These include vaccines for:

**Leptospirosis**, a highly contagious illness spread through the urine of infected wildlife such as squirrels, raccoons, foxes, and rodents.

**Canine influenza (CIV)**, one of the more severe and transmittable illnesses that can threaten our best friends' well-being. Elderly dogs and those with preexisting conditions are particularly vulnerable.

**Bordetella**, a highly contagious respiratory illness commonly referred to as "kennel cough." Pets who spend time in boarding facilities, doggie daycares, or dog parks should be vaccinated.

**Talk to a member of our staff or your Lake Pine veterinarian about a personalized vaccination plan for the health and well-being of your best friend.**