

Lyme disease: the UK needs action!

An infection transmitted by a tick bite: misdiagnosed, under-treated, under-researched

Action on Awareness

We hear a constant stream of unsolicited complaints from the public that their doctors either admit to knowing very little about Lyme disease or rule it out on unjustifiable grounds.

"I was taken into hospital feeling really ill with a huge bullseye type rash ... one doc that came around the ward even said it cant be Lyme because we dont have it in this country."

"I am told because my daughter has no rash she cannot be infected."

"my Dr would not confirm a Lyme diagnosis without a positive result even though I had a tick bite, a classic EM rash and continued symptoms"

"One consultant told me there were no ticks in the UK so I couldn't possibly have Lyme!"

All are wrong! More effort must be made by health authorities to make doctors and the public aware of the basic facts of Lyme.

Action on Guidelines

The HPA's Lyme Borreliosis Unit recommends guidelines published by the Infectious Diseases Society of America. These guidelines have been widely criticised for failing to consider all the available evidence, and have been reviewed following a recent legal investigation. The review raised doubts in key areas, and acknowledged "the well-established microbiological and clinical distinctions in Lyme borreliosis" in Europe and the USA.

The review focussed on keeping the guidelines relevant to the USA, so they should be used with caution in the UK. We urgently need open and unbiased UK and European guidelines that take account of the full range of scientific evidence and medical opinion.

Action on Research

The bacteria responsible for Lyme disease are the most genetically complex known, by a long way. Recent research has only served to highlight how complex Lyme disease can be, and there are many unanswered questions. More research is needed before we can fully understand Lyme disease and other tick-borne infections, and to determine the best treatments.

Lyme Disease Action
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