

St. Ignatius

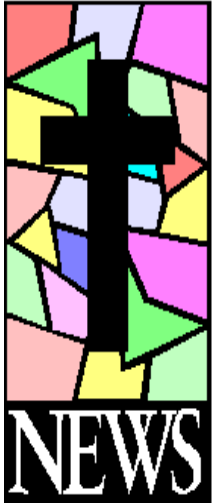
Marys Parish Nurse News Bulletin

Monthly News Update

LETTER

Vol. XIII No. 9

May, 2010



Greetings from your Parish Nurse,

May is Lyme Disease Awareness Month. I took my dog in for her yearly physical and she is started on medication to prevent Lyme Disease from ticks that she can pick up when she goes down into the open field below the house.

Lyme disease is a bacterial illness caused by a bacterium called a "spirochete."

Certain ticks found on deer harbor the bacterium in their stomachs. Lyme disease is spread by these ticks when they bite the skin, which permits the bacterium to infect the body. Lyme disease is not contagious from an

affected person to someone else.

Lyme disease can cause abnormalities in the skin, joints, heart, and nervous system.

Lyme disease has been reported most often in the northeastern United States. It is primarily contracted in the Northeast from the state of Maine to Maryland, in the Midwest in Minnesota and Wisconsin, and in the West in Oregon and Northern California.

What are signs and symptoms?

Lyme disease affects different areas of the body in varying degrees as it progresses. The site where the tick bites the body is where the bacteria enter through the skin. The infection causes an expanding reddish rash that is often associated with "flu-like" symptoms. Later, it can produce abnormalities in the joints, heart, and nervous system.

In the early phase of the illness, with days to weeks of the tick bite, the skin around the bite develops an expanding ring of unraised redness. There may be an outer ring of brighter redness and a central area of clearing, leading to a "bull's eye" appearance. People often can't recall the tick bite (the ticks can be as small as the period in this paragraph). Generalized fatigue, muscle and joint stiffness, swollen lymph nodes and headache

resembling symptoms of a virus infection accompany the rash. The redness resolves in about a month. Over months, disease in the joints, heart, and nervous system can occur. The later phases of Lyme disease can affect the heart, causing inflammation of the heart muscle. The nervous system can develop facial muscle paralysis (Bell's palsy), abnormal sensation due to disease of peripheral nerves, meningitis, and confusion. Arthritis begins with swelling, stiffness, and pain.

Anxiety and depression occur with an increased rate in people with Lyme disease.

How is Lyme's disease diagnosed? A good thorough physical exam and review of the patient's history in order to exclude diseases with similar findings in the joints, heart, and nervous system are what should be done initially. There are two lab tests that can be done to detect antibodies that have developed in the body. One is called the ELISA test and the confirmatory test that is most reliable is the Western Blot assay antibody test.

What is the Treatment for Lyme disease?

Most cases of Lyme disease are curable with antibiotics. The type of antibiotic depends on the stage of the disease and what areas of the body

are affected. Early illness is usually treated with medicines taken by mouth. Seek medical attention as soon as possible. Later stage illnesses might require intravenous drugs.

How can Lyme disease be prevented?

Because Lyme disease is transmitted by ticks attaching to the body, it is important to use tick-bite avoidance techniques when visiting known tick areas. Spraying insect repellent containing DEET onto exposed skin can help. Wearing long pants tucked into boots and long sleeves can protect the skin. Clothing, children, and pets should be examined for ticks. Ticks can be removed gently with tweezers and saved in a jar for later identification.

Prevention is the key.

Blood Pressure Check

I will be checking blood pressures after both Masses on the weekend of May 22nd & 23rd.

Reminders.

Visits.

If you think that you would like a visit from me or Father Rick, all you have to do is call the office and leave me a message. Father can be reached at the rectory or church office also. Father makes visits on First Fridays to

those who are homebound. Just give the office a call if you would like Father to stop. We still miss people in the hospital. Again give the office a call to let us know if you would like a visit.

Senior Connection

Seniors, don't forget to check out the monthly, @Senior Connection@ which is put out by the Diocese of Madison just for you. Copies can be found at each entrance.

Health Fair Coming

Mark your calendars for Friday, May 21st from 1-3pm. Place – Senior Center in Mt. Horeb. Many agencies will be available to answer your health questions. You can have your blood pressure checked, have your questions about medications answered, have questions about Medicare D from a representative from Social Security answered, have questions about Hospice answered and more. More will be coming out in the newspaper and senior newsletter.

Health Tidbits.

When is the best time to check your own blood pressure?

You can check it any time of the day, but try to do it the same time every day, and in the same arm. Blood pressures do tend to be higher in the morning, partly because of the little burst of adrenaline we need to get ourselves going at the start of the day. Just be sure to check it after you have been sitting quietly for about five minutes.

Shingles and stroke. Shingles, a painful rash affecting adults that is set off by the same virus that causes chickenpox, increases the chance of having a stroke over the next year, especially when the virus affects the

area around the eyes. If you are one of the million or so Americans who develop shingles each year, it's a good idea to pay extra attention afterward to your blood pressure, cholesterol, and other risk factors for stroke.

Healthy reminder. Please do not drive while using your cell phone or texting. Just don't answer the phone while you are driving. You can be distracted even when you are using your GPS system while driving especially if you are driving alone. Let's keep our streets and highways safe and avoid an accident. A life is more important than answering the phone or making a call or texting. Think about it.

Food for Thought

Duty is a very personal thing. It is what comes from knowing the need to take action and not just a need to urge others to do something.

-Mother Teresa of Calcuta-

It is a great mistake for men to give up paying compliments, for when they give up saying what is charming, they give up thinking what is charming.

-Oscar Wilde-

What's done to children, they will do to society.

-Dr. Karl Menninger-

Life is not so short but that there is always time for courtesy.

-Ralph Waldo Emerson-

Happy Mother's Day to all the mothers out there. May you spend a nice day with your families.