Lyme Disease Update
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It’s spring! The days are warming and many of us are spending more time out of doors, gardening and enjoying the unfolding of blossoms and new leaves. Nymph forms of *Ixodes* black-legged ticks, potential carriers of *Borrelia burgdorferi* are also mobilizing, heralding the high risk seasons for Lyme disease. Particularly in the northeast, mid-Atlantic, and upper mid-west states, but in some other areas as well, it’s time to limit exposure to high grasses and brushy areas, tuck pants into socks or boots, use insect repellents, check your body for ticks after being outdoors, and remove ticks promptly. Diagnosis of infection is often made based on symptoms of fever, headache, fatigue, a typical rash present in about 80% of diagnosed cases, and possibility of exposure to infected ticks. If the infection is not treated, it can affect the joints, nervous system and heart. The Infectious Disease Society of America does not recommend routine antibiotic prophylaxis or serologic testing after a tick bite, but in situations where a tick is reliably identified as an adult or nymphal *I. scapularis* tick, and 20% or more of local ticks carry the Lyme disease germ, and the tick has been attached for 36 or more hours, and treatment can be given within 72 hours of removal of the tick, a single 200mg dose of oral Doxycycline may be given, if not otherwise contraindicated (strength of recommendation: moderately in favor based on at least one properly randomized controlled trial – B-I). A number of antibiotics, usually in a fourteen to twenty one day course, can be used to treat Lyme disease. Early recognition of Lyme disease and prompt treatment are the keys to limiting disability. Many people with early disease need no time off work or work restrictions. Length of disability will be influenced by the severity of symptoms and signs, stage at which the condition is diagnosed and treated, and the presence of any joint, neurologic, or cardiac complications.

Further sources of information:
1. www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/lyme

COMPANY DESCRIPTION

Headquartered in Boca Raton, Florida, Reliable RS (RRS) is a leading national provider of physician intensive, specialty-matched disability and complex return to work reviews for corporations, insurers and Third Party Administrators (TPAs). Our clients use the objectivity and medical intelligence that RRS provides to reduce risk and assure fairness in adjudicating claims. We provide external medical reviews evaluating Disability and Family Medical Leave (FMLA) cases.

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